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FAITH IN THE DIVINE FATHERHOOD

FAITH IN THE DIVINE FATHERHOOD

BY
WILLIAM P. KING
Author of "The Practice of the Principles of Jesus"

14277

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Gratefully dedicated
to my patient pa-
rishioners of the
past, present
and future

FOREWORD

THIS volume enters into a realm of the theoretical and doctrinal which my former volume, "The Practice of the Principles of Jesus," did not discuss.

A running start is made with the setting forth of the historical arguments for theism as well as the more modern form of apologetics.

Where the present volume enters into the practical phases of religion, which were set forth in the former volume, it is in the way of further elaboration rather than repetition. The three chapters on "The Heresy of the Orthodox" supplement the former discussion at that point.

There is some inevitable overlapping of ideas within the volume itself. For example, the evidential value of spiritual experience occupies an entire chapter, but this same evidential value also finds expression in connection with the evidence of the Fatherhood of God and with the argument from the Person of Christ.

It is my own ineradicable conviction that a treatise of apologetic value must keep a proper balance between the new and the old. We must avoid both the idle curiosity of the ancient Athenians "for some new thing," and an idolatry of the old which becomes static through a mistaken mania for safety.

A writer gives the story of a woman in Tennessee who saw two men in front of her home measuring off a distance of ground. The one erected a tripod at one end of the line and, spying through a glass set horizontally, gesticulated to his companion who held an upright pole at the other end of the line. They were surveyors out on governmental business. When they moved and repeated their performance in the rear of this owner's home, curiosity overcame her, and she approached them saying: "What are you men doing here?" They answered: "We are establishing the county line." "And what is that?" she inquired. They answered: "Well, you see, we used to think that the line ran in the front of your house, which put you in Sumner County. Now we find that it runs in the rear of your house, which makes your residence in Davidson County." She at once protested: "See here, I've always heard that Davidson County is an unhealthy place to live in. I won't live there; so you put that line right back where it has always been and where it shall always stay." The county line doubtless had some bearing on taxation, but could have no effect on sanitation.

Some people are nervously concerned in their religious thinking over changes which do not disturb their spiritual inheritance. Theologians announce the axiomatic fact with much vehemence that the truth of the gospel is unchanging, and then they proceed with confusion of thought to infer

that their own interpretation of the truth is permanent and that their own thought-forms are eternal. The truth of God's revelation of Christ's redeeming love for man is eternal and unchanging, but this does not mean that there were finality and infallibility in the Scriptural interpretation of the early Church fathers, of the Medieval Church, of Martin Luther, of John Calvin, and of John Wesley.

New light will continually break forth from the Word of God and on the Word of God.

The true interpretation of spiritual truth belongs neither to the rigid traditionalist nor to the rabid radical. "Then said Jesus unto them, Therefore every scribe who is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is a householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old."

My very great indebtedness is acknowledged to the various authors who are quoted throughout this volume.

I am especially grateful to Dr. R. E. Park and Dr. W. D. Hooper of the State University of Georgia, and to Rev. George L. King, a Methodist pastor in the North Georgia Conference, for a number of corrections and minor changes.

Some of the material in this volume has already appeared in the Sunday Magazine Section of the *Atlanta Constitution*. Many changes, however, have been made both in form and substance.

THE AUTHOR.

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INTRODUCTION

If the author of this book may be said to have a hobby at all, it is that Jesus Christ must be taken seriously. As preacher, editor, and author, he has insisted with repeated emphasis that Jesus really reveals God and that the highest wisdom is to be found in his teaching. In "The Practice of the Principles of Jesus" Dr. King took the position that the Sermon on the Mount was meant for application in all the affairs of life, and all who are acquainted with him know that he practices what he preaches.

The most practical question that any man can ask is, How shall I think of God? Religious teachers have always tried to find the analogy that would best indicate the nature and intention of the Supreme Power, and people in all walks of life are daily giving an answer to the question, What is God like? In the pages of this book, the reader is carried through the various views that have been held of God and brought straight to the culmination of all revelation in Jesus Christ. In ancient times God was thought of as the supreme ruler, not unlike an Oriental monarch, or as a lawgiver and judge, but Jesus presented him in terms of fatherhood. God is father first of all, and all his acts as creator, ruler, and judge are consistent with, and determined by, fatherly love. Theologians have often hesitated to take the revelation of Jesus at its face value and attempted to interpret God's relation to man through governments and courts; but Dr. King takes a firm stand upon the Divine

Fatherhood and makes trust in God as Father the basis of the saved and abundant life.

The style of the book shows that the author's aim is to take the best thought of the schools and present it in such a way that the general reader will appreciate and understand it and realize that views which have flitted vaguely through his mind have received careful attention and been assessed at their true value. Few men are so well qualified for writing such a book as Dr. King. As a diligent student and profound thinker, he has mastered the works of the great philosophers and theologians and kept in touch with the best literature of the day, and as a preacher and writer he has established such sympathetic contact with his hearers and readers that he is able to convey difficult thought in language that may be easily understood. Believing that all people are interested in deep truth, he has studied the art of expression to such purpose that the members of his congregation, composed of students, doctors, lawyers, merchants, housewives, and people of every sort, can all get his meaning. His hearers and readers soon learn to expect the brilliant epigram that will scatter light like a flash of lightning on a dark night.

Through the wide circulation of "The Practice of the Principles of Jesus" the way has been opened for this new book, which will feed the mind, strengthen faith, and purify the heart.

GILBERT T. ROWE.

PART ONE

NONTHEISTIC THEORIES OF THE UNIVERSE

CHAPTER I

POLYTHEISM—DUALISM—DEISM—PANTHEISM

I

Polytheism belongs to the earlier stages of religious development. In the form of henotheism there is only one God for a particular people, while other peoples have their own gods. There is an evident mark of progress in the Old Testament from the conception of one God for Israel, while the other nations had their gods, to the idea at last of the one God for all the nations, as taught by the great prophets.

We see this process of development in one man. At first Jonah takes ship to Tarshish to flee "from the presence of the Lord," and at last he preaches the God of Israel as the God of the Ninevites.

While henotheism is polytheistic, yet polytheism in its strict form comes first, and affirms a plurality of gods, a number of superhuman wills ruling over each of the several nations. All the powers of nature were deified, and natural objects, as the sun and moon, were worshiped.

The heroes of a people with the lapse of time were invested with superhuman qualities and powers. The natural impulse to worship satisfied itself with many objects which were deified.

The prophets of Israel have placed the world under a lasting obligation for their uncompromising opposition to the worship of many gods.

Polytheism has been outlawed in the court of reason and by modern knowledge with its conception of the universe with unity of laws.

II

In dualism the many gods are reduced to two gods. These two deities are opposed to each other. This theory had its origin in Zoroastrianism, which declared that Ahriman, the god of darkness, and Ormuzd, the god of light, were competing for the control of the world. Christianity had its early struggle with dualism in the form of Gnosticism, which held that matter is intrinsically evil and the creation of an evil deity. This error concerning the evil of matter still lingers in the theology of some of the Churches. The further persistence of dualism is seen in the exalted power which is given to Satan. In Milton's "Paradise Lost" he is made attractive in his greatness and power: a greatness and a power which are never ascribed to him in the divine revelation.

III

Deism affirms a faith in one God, but a God who reveals himself through universal, natural law ra her than through divine revelation. Deism is distinguished from atheism in that it holds to the

existence of God; from pantheism in that it stresses the transcendence of God; from theism in that it denies revelation. The deist conceives of God as a creator who permitted his creation to administer itself through natural law. Deism gives us an absentee God outside the world.

Deism is a decadent conception of God. The modern mind will not believe in a God who cares no more for the world than the God of the deist. It is becoming more evident that we must choose the God revealed in Jesus Christ or no God at all.

IV

Pantheism interprets all reality as a direct expression of the activity of God. As its name signifies, pantheism holds that everything is God and God is everything.

The pantheists stretch the divine out to such thinness that faith is left without a foundation. The personality of God is denied and he comes to consciousness only in finite beings. The dim conception of the God who is left to us is a God who is not good, since his activity is in the evil as truly as in the good.

There is no logical stopping place between the declaration of pantheism that everything is God and the declaration of atheism that there is no God.

Deism denies the immanence of God and leaves us without a God who works with us in the world.

Pantheism denies the transcendence of God and leaves us without a God who is anything more than the natural processes of the world.

Pantheism turns the verdict of the moral consciousness, the voice of conscience, into a delusion and leaves us in a world which mocks our highest aspirations.

God becomes the source of evil as well as of good, and there is the blotting out of all moral distinction.

Matthew Arnold voiced his despair at the fatalism of such a system of belief:

"Ah, love, let us be true to one another,
For the world, which seems
To lie before us like a land of dreams,
So various, so beautiful, so new,
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;
And we are here as on a darkling plain
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,
Where ignorant armies clash by night."

CHAPTER II

AGNOSTICISM—ATHEISM

I

THE claim of agnosticism is that we cannot know ultimate reality, but only phenomenal appearances. The agnostic says that he does not know and knows that he does not know, and yet asserts that he knows that no one else knows. There is the mixture of presumption and dogmatism with extreme humility.

The agnostic has a right to confess his own ignorance, but when he proceeds to confess the ignorance of all men, he is assuming too much knowledge.

Agnosticism is the destruction of all knowledge, since it not only cannot know anything, but cannot know that it cannot know. Agnosticism commits intellectual suicide and then refuses to quit talking. Deism says that there is a God, but he does not speak to men in a spiritual revelation. This is to make God less than good.

Agnosticism says that if there is a God, he cannot make himself known. This is to make God the symbol of absolute weakness. Even a helpless infant has power enough to make its presence known. Has God left no unmistakable trace of himself in the universe?

I think it might just as well be admitted here that religious dogmatists have gone to as great an

extreme in their profession of knowledge as agnostics have in their profession of ignorance.

Theologians have discussed in accents of absolute certainty the mind of God in his purposes and decrees. They have professed a profound acquaintance with all the deliberations of the three persons of the Trinity. They have endeavored to analyze the mind of God as minutely as a chemist might analyze a drop of water.

If the agnostic fails to recognize the limitation of his ignorance, the religious dogmatist has failed to realize the limitation of his knowledge.

St. Paul expresses the proper balance between these two types of mind: "Now I know in part."

Our knowledge is limited, but nevertheless we have knowledge.

The vast margin of mystery cannot amount to the negation of knowledge, when every blade of grass is an insoluble riddle and every relationship of mind and body is the perplexity of all psychologists. In spite of all mysteries we are brought face to face with the clear-cut alternative that the universe is either the sport of blind chance or the product of intelligent purpose. We can conceive of no middle ground.

> "If chance could fashion but a little flower
> With perfume for each tiny thief,
> And furnish it with sunshine and with shower,
> Then chance would be Creator with the power
> To build a world for unbelief."

Agnosticism occupies an unstable position. For the most part agnostics are atheists with merely a different spelling. On the part, however, of some who are termed agnostics, there is the decided leaning toward theism. Kant, in his failure to find God through pure reason, falls back on the practical reason and affirms God, freedom, and immortality.

John Stuart Mill was a leader among the agnostics of his day. In his posthumous essays he says: "It appears to me that the indulgence of hope with regard to the government of the universe and the destiny of men after death, while we recognize as a clear truth that we have no ground for more than a hope, is legitimate and philosophically defensible." In an essay on Mill, Wilfred Ward writes: "Mr. Leslie Stephens was reported to have paced the room with indignation, which could not be contained, while his wife yet further angered him by the poor consolation of: 'I told you so; I always said John Mill was orthodox.'"

Huxley, inventor of the very word "agnostic," consented that the name of God, together with a hope of immortality, should appear on his tombstone in an inscription written by his wife and approved by himself.

These philosophical advocates of agnosticism were in a state of unstable equilibrium between disbelief and faith, and when facing eternity the balance leaned toward faith.

Atheism is a disbelief in the existence of a personal God in control of the universe. It is more positive in its denial of God than agnosticism.

Atheism sees only a blind unconscious force, a mindless universe without plan or purpose. Everything happens by chance. The laws of the universe were established in a haphazard way by a mindless force. The evidences of mind inwrought into the very material structure of the universe are delusive. The mind of Shakespeare and the personality of Jesus Christ were the results of the chance clashing and combination of atoms.

The men who believe in these wonderful achievements of unintelligent force should find no difficulty in believing all the fables and legends of antiquity as actual history. They should have no trouble in accepting without discrimination all sorts of marvels and miracles. The medieval theologians with their superstitious notions are far surpassed in credulity by the representatives of atheism.

Materialism, the more common form of atheism, is the doctrine that mind has no existence except as a function of the body. Materialism is the most formidable foe of the Christian faith. The modern progress of physical science has been conducive to the progress of materialism.

The necessity for God is excluded, and the materialist dogmatically assumes the sufficiency of matter and force in the production of all the higher elements and faculties of the human personality.

Modern scientific knowledge in its latest phases gives no encouragement to materialism.

The molecules have not only been resolved into atoms, but the atoms into electrons, or invisible points of energy, and the materialists have lost one of their twin gods. Matter at last has become so attenuated that the materialist must believe in the invisible.

Balfour says: "We know too much about matter to be materialists."

It requires a great stretch of credulity to believe that matter can produce thought.

The characteristic of matter is motion. The characteristics of mind are thought, emotion, and will power. Matter is an instrument which the mind uses and not an agent which produces mind.

If we are credulous enough to suppose that the twin gods of materialism, matter and force, can unconsciously produce the human personality, and the character of Jesus Christ, then we might imagine that unconscious matter and force might produce a conscious God.

The scientist, even when he leans toward materialism, confesses the impossibility of accounting for consciousness.

Streeter in "Reality" writes:

> It has taken centuries of conscious and intelligent effort to produce the machine which prints our morning paper, and has this universe, a machine the complexity and intricacy of which baffles the intellect and bewilders the imagination, come into

existence of itself, the result of blind unconscious force? Is the universe one gigantic accident consequent upon an infinite succession of happy flukes? Of all the strange beliefs that man has cherished, none flaunts a paradox so staggering as this.[1]

What would be the final result of atheism? Many atheists have inherited virtue from the religious faith which they denied, but in the long run atheism would mean a human race without morals, without religion, without faith, hope, and love.

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[1] "Reality." By B. H. Streeter. The Macmillan Company.

PART TWO
THE THEISTIC THEORY OF THE UNIVERSE

CHAPTER III

THE REASONABLE BASIS OF THE THEISTIC FAITH

I

THEISM is the doctrine that the universe owes its existence and continuousness in existence to the reason and will of a self-existent Being who is infinitely powerful, wise, and good. It is only through the divine revelation which is claimed by theism that we can come to a satisfying conception of the character of God.

It must be admitted, however, that our faith in the God of intelligence and love whom Christ reveals would be unstable if there were nothing in the world to verify it.

But if man is entirely dependent for his idea of religion on an outer revelation, then he must have what Schelling calls "an original atheism of consciousness."

The theistic faith is broad-based on manifold rational grounds, not only on the evidence which nature affords, but on the nature of man, and on the divine revelation which culminates in Jesus Christ.

Since God is not demonstrated as a mathematical proposition, there always remains the possibility of doubt, however strong the probabilities are for the being and activity of God.

Furthermore the religious faith and sense of God did not spring out of a process of reasoning for the existence of God, but the process of reasoning was used as a confirmation of the age-long and universal aspiration after God. Man reaches this more or less certain confirmation of his faith in the personality and intelligence of God through a variety of considerations:

1. Man's theistic faith results from his power to interpret the universe rationally. He proceeds with confidence in his powers of perception and reason and finds that the world responds to this trust. The power of man's mind to interpret the universe implies a mind in the universe which is interpretable. He finds definite and intelligible laws in chemistry and mathematics, and in the movement of the planets and the stars. He discovers that the laws of geometry are already in his own mind. It was this which led Aristotle to say, "God geometrizes."

2. Closely related to this is faith in the Supreme intelligence back of all phenomena through the idea of cause. It is an axiom of science that every effect must have a sufficient cause. The existence of ourselves and the existence of the universe must have for explaining them a sufficient cause. If the universe began to exist at some point in time, there must have been a cause sufficient to produce it. If the universe is itself eternal, then the cause would not be antecedent in time, but there would

be the underlying cause which molds it in ever-changing forms, and is its progressive unfolding.

3. There is then manifest in the world the presence of purpose. The old argument from design has been modified by modern science so that we cannot hold narrowly to this argument from particular adaptation. But despite defects in the old form of reasoning the presence of purpose goes back of all particular forms and adaptations, and shows the purpose and power of adaptation which belong to the very structure of the ultimate atoms and electrons. The larger, grander conception of purpose is seen in the progress of nature toward man, the crown of creation, intelligent, moral, spiritual, with an apparently endless capacity for intellectual and spiritual progress.

4. The religious nature of man gives evidence of a personal God. "Man is incurably religious."

Theism affirms that man's moral consciousness is reliable. If God is not good, he has deceived us, and tricked us in putting within our spirits high aspirations which are only delusive, and we are the victims of a fraud. And if God is good, we may rely on the trueness of our religious nature, and know that man's higher energies and hopes are not grasping at a shadow.

5. Faith in a personal God who is good is evidenced by our spiritual experience. A confidence in spiritual experience is the assurance that the soul is in touch with everlasting reality. We cannot

believe that the lower senses speak the truth as to objective reality, while the highest life, with its love, joy, peace, goodness, faith, and all the fruit of the spirit, is dealing only with visionary qualities without any corresponding world of spiritual realities.

"Speak to Him, thou, for he hears, and Spirit with Spirit can meet—
Closer is he than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet."

II

The vast increase in our modern knowledge of the universe has changed, but it has not destroyed our theistic interpretation of life and the world.

The transition has brought to some an eclipse of faith. They have been unable to adapt themselves to a larger world. Others are in a situation only a little less unfortunate in that they endeavor to retain a sheltered and protected faith against the invasion of a knowledge which disturbs their customary conceptions.

The first class breaks forth into the lamentation: "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him." It is a wail like that of Clifford, seeing "the spring sun shine out of an empty heaven to light up a soulless earth, feeling with utter loneliness that the Great Companion is dead."

The second class has not lost God, but is striving to hold on to a little God. There is a third type

which takes advantage of a transitional period to lightly and frivolously renounce God, the thought of whom has never fitted in with its manner of living.

There is still a fourth type, a true type which, while not falling into the conception of God as unknowable, at the same time recognizes the limitation of human knowledge in dealing with the Infinite Being.

They are in accord with St. Paul: "Who hath been his counselor?" They say with Isaiah, "For even as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are Jehovah's ways higher than our ways, and his thoughts than our thoughts." They exclaim with Job, "Who by searching can find out God?" They do not claim to comprehend God, but they apprehend him, and amid the inconceivable vastness of the universe they retain their faith in the reality of a God who is great enough for the greatness of the world.

I do not lay claim to any competence for passing on certain disputed questions of evolution, but as touching a general process of evolution there is little difference of opinion.

We are familiar with verified scientific facts which our fathers never knew. Some have fallen away from the faith because it has not been interpreted in the light of our new knowledge.

Old landmarks have disappeared. Many former notions have gone into the melting pot. But we

have only gained in the passing away of some former conceptions. All new conceptions that are true are a distinct gain.

The Irishman was asked if he were not afraid a wind would upset the stone wall he was building. Pat replied: "And, faith, it is two feet high and three feet wide, and if it upsets, it will be a foot higher than before." When you imagine that the Christian faith has been overturned, it has only been lifted higher.

There is the persistence of the faith despite the changed ideas of the universe, despite the mistaken defense of its friends and the mistaken opposition of its foes.

Christian faith has suffered in the house of its friends. They have been guilty of making a weak defense, guilty of foolish interpretations of God's word, guilty of opposing the newly discovered facts which have been breaking forth from the book of nature, which is also the book of God, so that it has been too truly said in derision, "The cradle of the infant Hercules of every science has been surrounded by the bodies of strangled theologians."

All evidences which science has to give of an evolutionary process should be gladly welcomed by the Christian mind.

There is the disposition in certain quarters to create much alarm over the subject of evolution. There is no occasion for fright. The theory of evolution will at last fail or win out through the

absence of sufficient corroborating facts or the presence of facts which verify the theory. In the meantime when certain theologians are endeavoring to "throw a scare" we may rest confident in the faith that even if the theory of evolution should be proved beyond question, it is not opposed to theism.

The classic definition of Le Conte is: "Evolution is continuous, progressive change, according to fixed laws, by resident force."

The theistic evolutionist holds that the energizing power in the world is the activity of God, and the fixed laws are God's ways of doing things.

If it should be possible to refute the arguments of evolution, it can never be done by sophistry. There are the controversialists who appeal to the Scriptural statement of man made "in the image of God," as if these words meant a physical image. To be in the image of God is to have his spiritual nature; it is to possess intellectual, emotional, and volitional qualities.

That man is made in the image of God is consistent with either the immediateness or gradualness of man's creation.

The fact that God created is a religious question; the method of God's creation is a scientific question. We shall finally reach a satisfactory solution by avoiding a confusion of thought.

CHAPTER IV

SOME VARIATIONS OF THE THEISTIC THEORY

I

Among the large number who hold to the theistic faith, there are various interpretations of the nature and methods of God. It goes without saying that there is a very wide divergence in the conception of God between the theists who accept and the theists who reject the theory of evolution.

II

There is a difference among professed theists as touching the finiteness and the infiniteness of God. The doctrine of a finite growing God is held by those philosophers who hold that this view affords the only possibility of accounting for a world torn in the conflict between good and evil, and that God must be limited in knowledge and power or he is not good. This theory affords no resting place for the mind and leads back to the Infinite as the Unknowable Power. Dr. J. H. Snowden says:

> We accept the testimony of these thinkers to the personal and spiritual elements in the universe, yet cannot stop at their halfway station of a finite God, but must go on toward the logical limit and fulfillment of their own principle in the one infinite, eternal, personal God, Creator of the world, and Father of our Spirits.[1]

[1] "The Personality of God." By J. H. Snowden. The Macmillan Company.

III

Closely related to the varieties of opinion of a finite God is the difference between the commonly accepted view of the divine creator of matter and the form of theistic dualism which holds to the eternity of matter, along with the eternity of God.

All this is of course in a realm of deep mystery. Did God exist at a certain time before creation, alone, without the universe, or has there been eternally coexistent with God a universe which was dependent upon him?

The idea expressed in this latter conception is that while matter is eternal, it is molded and controlled by spirit. Matter was plastic material which God shaped and formed. According to this idea there was not the creation of the universe out of nothing, but creation was the forming and organizing power put forth on the part of God.

There are leading theists, however, who hold that peril besets the faith, if there prevails the conception of the eternity of matter, and that the inevitable result is either dualism or pantheism.

We thus have the ablest advocates of the theistic faith differing as to the logical consequences involved in the conception of an eternal universe.

In a question which leads into such an unfathomable mystery, there does not appear any justification for dogmatic claim to certainty.

There are variations among theists which belong

to the more familiar and traditional matter of religious speculation.

IV

There are the contrasted views, as touching divine predestination, of Calvinism and Arminianism. The historical statement of Calvinism is: "Certain men and angels are foreordained to everlasting death, these persons so doomed being particularly and unchangeably designed, and their number is so certain and definite that it cannot be either increased or diminished."

We cannot reasonably hold to any theory of God which contradicts man's ineradicable sense of his freedom. Against the position of Calvinism, Arminianism denies any such predestination, but holds instead to a divine foreknowledge of all events, including the acts of a free moral personality. It is doubtful whether the theory of Arminianism removed the difficulties of faith as easily as it has claimed. If a man believes that his sins are foreknown of God, he might argue that he will never act contrary to this foreknowledge. Are we then delivered from the toils of fatalism?

For this reason some theologians have contended that since divine omnipotence cannot do an impossible thing, neither can divine omniscience know an unknowable thing, and that certain moral acts of a free personality are essentially unknowable.

V

There are also differing views as touching the providence of God and a divine partialism.

The providence of God has been interpreted narrowly as bestowing temporal blessings on the good, and visiting temporal calamities on the evil. It was this kind of interpretation of divine providence which received the protest of Job, but which still lingers in popular thought. The providence of God according to Jesus does not proceed according to a method of favoritism. "He maketh his sun to rise upon the evil and the good, and sendeth rain upon the just and the unjust."

VI

There are the opposing ideas represented by Trinitarianism and Unitarianism which have been coexistent with the entire history of the Christian Church. The Unitarian controversy has served a helpful mission in delivering the Christian faith from the peril of tritheism. There has been the tendency to interpret the word "person" according to our notion of the word as meaning a distinct and separate entity. But our English word "person" comes from the Latin *persona*, which stood for a character in a drama, when one individual may represent many parts or characters. Strict Unitarianism, whether represented by Christian Unitarian, or Mohammedan, has never been justified by its practical results.

The doctrine of the Trinity when freed from certain traditional encumbrances is in perfect harmony with the best modern interpretation of theism.

Dr. W. N. Clarke writes:

> There are three relations of God to men: revealing, revealed, and abiding. The relations are not abstract, but practical. They have to do with Christ revealing God, with God as Christ revealed him, and with God as Christ has brought them home to him. These three were not only relations of one and the same God, but they were relations that concerned the saving of men, and were known through the experience of salvation. Grace in Christ, Love in God, Communion of the Spirit; in these salvation dwelt, and our Saviour was in them all.[1]

Thus the three Persons of the Trinity are Persons according to ancient significance, but not according to the modern significance of the word "person."

VII

There is the fundamentalist, in contrast with the progressive, idea of God. This essential difference centers in a conception of God and his relation to the world. The fundamentalist idea of God is static and is dominated by the earlier and more imperfect interpretation of God. It is essentially Judaic. The autocratic or kingly idea of God is determinative.

The progressive idea of God makes his Fatherhood the central determinative idea.

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[1] "The Christian Doctrine of God." By W. N. Clarke. Scribners.

PART THREE
ARGUMENTS FOR THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

CHAPTER V

THE ONTOLOGICAL, COSMOLOGICAL AND TELEOLOGICAL ARGUMENTS

It may as well be admitted that in making arguments for the existence of God, we are not following the Biblical method.

The Bible nowhere argues for God; it assumes God, and this is true throughout its entire contents. There belongs to the Biblical saints and writers that sense of assurance of God that made all argument unnecessary and superfluous.

It was inevitable, however, that the reasoning faculty should be brought into exercise.

There will be given the great historic arguments for the existence of God along with other arguments which are more distinctively modern. Despite the high-sounding names we can readily understand the meaning.

I

There is the ontological argument. The word is derived from two Greek words, which mean the reason or ground of being.

In the form which Anselm gives it, the affirmation is made that the most perfect conceivable being must be actual. According to Descartes the presence of the idea of the Infinite in the mind is evi-

dence that the infinite Author must have originated it.

This is the argument from thought to Being.

The idea of the Perfect Being is universal.

This form of reasoning asserts that the highest and best conceptions must be real, for the reason that the reality of such a being is greater than the mere thought of such a being.

Kant is the most severe critic of the logic of this argument, and he shifts the battle line of the discussion by showing that the abstract thought cannot amount to a positive proof of God. But even though the argument falls short of being sufficient within itself to bring convincing proof, it will always retain evidential value.

The fact is that, according to the analogy of objective material realities answering to the physical senses, it is extremely doubtful whether the thought of God could have originated or persisted in the human mind aside from the objective reality of God. It is doubtless true that the strengthening assurance of God has been helped by the shifting of interest from abstract thought to concrete reasoning, but an abiding element of value in the old argument abides.

II

There is the cosmological argument, which is based on the existence of the world. Finite things did not originate within themselves. This argu-

ment claims that God is necessary to explain the universe.

There are only two possible theories of the universe. Either it began to exist in time or it is eternal. But neither hypothesis removes the necessity of causation.

If the universe had a beginning in time, there must have been a First Cause sufficient for bringing into existence the entire visible order.

If the universe is eternal, then there must be cause sufficient to account for the ever-changing and ever-evolving world, and this cause bears the impress of mind, for it is interpreted by minds.

Even though we dignify the word Evolution with a capital letter, it does not represent power, but only the way in which the Power that is in the universe works.

Dr. C. R. Brown says:

I find myself in the presence of an orderly universe. The starry heavens declare the glory of God; and the marvelous adaptations of these countless orders of life show his handiwork. How did it all come about? "It just happened," some one may reply. "Matter and force were here from the first, and in some inexplicable way the great world order as we find it came to be." What a lame, inadequate explanation. The easy, shallow hypothesis breaks down under the weight of facts which it undertakes to explain. Who planned and directed this marvelous advance from the lowest forms of sentient being up to the very summit of existence as we know it? These human beings which make bold to look up into the face of the Infinite and claim kinship with him stand apparently at the climax of the process. Who planned it and made it possible? "Nobody," you answer. "Matter and force did it all." Surely you do not expect men

generally to take such an answer seriously. Until some one can bring me a more satisfactory hypothesis upon which to explain this orderly universe, the presence of life and the fact of progress, I shall continue to affirm my own belief in those historic words, "I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth."[1]

III

There is the teleological argument, which is also termed the argument from design or the doctrine of ends.

The criticism of Kant was directed toward this as toward the other traditional arguments. In reality, however, Kant leaves this argument undisturbed, for we can readily concede all that he claims as to the insufficiency of the argument in the way of absolutely positive demonstration.

It is true, however, that theists in the confirmation of their faith are not refusing help from other lines of argument.

The particular form of the argument from design, as stated by Paley, is no longer possible, but this is only to say that with the enlarged idea of the universe, which modern science brings, there must be an entirely different statement of the argument from design.

The slow and gradual process as held by evolution in no wise militates against the presence of the designing Mind. The traditional idea of design which belonged to the old conception of a direct

[1] "Why I Believe in Religion." By C. R. Brown. The Macmillan Company.

and immediate creational process is forever gone. But the wider teleology which belongs to the hypothesis of evolution still discerns in the order and adaptation of the evolving process, however wide its range and however far it extends back in time, the stamp of intelligent direction.

The old form of the teleological argument easily saw the evidence of design in the present adaptation of different objects, with the presumption that these objects have always been as they now are.

It also fell into a false interpretation of "special providence," and if a lightning stroke killed a bad man, it was in accordance with design, and if it killed a good man no attempt was made at explanation.

The new form of teleological argument makes no such easy and one-sided attempt at an interpretation of providence. And also with the idea of a gradual and continuous change it sees the evidence of design in the power that is gradually producing correspondences and adaptations. But whatever our theory, we are inevitably shut up to a choice between chance and purpose.

The first has no note of hope.

> "The world rolls round forever like a mill;
> It grinds out death and life and good and ill;
> It has no purpose, heart, or mind, or will."

The world is the mere sport of the reckless and blind forces of chance,

"A tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing."

Against this darkness of a world of pessimism, the two pioneer evolutionists speak.

Charles Darwin said: "If we consider the whole universe, the mind refuses to look at it as the outcome of chance."

Alfred Russell Wallace wrote: "The world is a manifestation of creative power, directive mind, and ultimate purpose."

We do not have the easy solution of the world and world processes that belonged to other times, but we may be secure in the faith that

"This world's no blot or blank
To us; it means intensely and means good.
To me its meaning is my meat and drink."

Archbishop Tillotson wrote:

How often might a man, after he had jumbled a set of letters together in a bag, fling them out upon the ground before they would fall into an exact poem, yea, or so much as make a good discourse in prose? And may not a little book be as easily made by chance as this great volume of the world? How long might a man be sprinkling colors upon canvas with a careless hand before they would happen to make the exact picture of a man? And is a man easier made by chance than his picture? How long might twenty thousand blind men, which should be sent from the several remote parts of England, wander up and down before they would all meet upon Salisbury Plain, and fall into rank and file in the exact order of an army? And yet this is much more easy to be imagined than that the innumerable blind parts of matter should rendezvous themselves into a world.

CHAPTER VI

THE ANTHROPOLOGICAL OR MORAL ARGUMENT, THE ARGUMENT FROM HISTORY, AND THE ARGUMENT FROM *CONSENSUS GENTIUM*

I

THERE follows in order the anthropological or moral argument.

Conscience and moral law point to a God who is good. The physical senses could not have been developed without the objective physical reality, and the mind would not have been possible in an irrational universe and conscience, a sense of goodness, the discrimination of right and wrong, would be inexplicable apart from the objective truth which is correlated with moral consciousness.

The highest quality of goodness could not spring from a fog bank of unreality.

God and duty are inseparable, and when religious instruction is ignored in the training of children we may expect the natural outcome in a breaking away from the moral standards.

Naturalistic ethics are without any nourishing life. Kant was doubtless too drastic in his treatment of other forms of theistic arguments, but he made a large reparation by his stress on the moral

argument and in his contention that morality demanded God.

Just as the presence of design in the world reveals a God of intelligence, so the presence of conscience in man reveals a God of goodness.

It is to be recognized, however, that the presence of evil in the world constantly shadows our faith in a God who is good. There is the dark fact of natural evil expressed in the familiar description of "Nature, red in tooth and claw."

There is the problem of moral evil which gave rise to the dilemma that in the permission of the evil God is either less than good or less than omnipotent.

This dilemma is only a seeming one.

A God who is good cannot produce human beings with the possibility of goodness unless there is also the freedom of choice which makes evil possible. If inability to do an impossible or contradictory thing limits the omnipotence of God, then we are ready to acknowledge that he is less than all-powerful.

As to the presence of natural evil in the world, the suffering inflicted by nature and by man upon man, it is only necessary in this connection to say in brief that, despite all the misery which dogs our footsteps, it is impossible to conceive of human life as one of progress toward character and happiness without the immutability of physical laws.

The violation or observance of these laws means human woe or human welfare.

In brief, this appears to be a world entirely adapted to the making of character when the life is rightly adjusted.

There is impressed on us the conviction that moral law is inherent in the very structure of the world. When we respond to that "Enduring Power not ourselves, which makes for righteousness," we find the moral law a gracious and beneficent fact.

If we are false to the moral government under which we live, we find, after all, that we do not break moral law; we only break our lives against moral law.

The tragedy of life teaches this lesson in letters of blood. Byron in the recklessness of his life forcefully illustrates this fact. Omitting his profane description of the world, he said, "Virtue, as I begin to see it, is the only thing that will do in this world."

There is the utter failure of all systems of denial in making any explanation of the original growth of the moral consciousness and the imperative "ought" aside from faith in a moral God who presides over a moral order.

II

An argument which it may be well to state in a distinct and separate form is the argument from history. The argument from history shows the

evidence of God in corporate society, and the stamp of divine purpose and providence in the history of humanity.

It may be readily seen how this argument overlaps the teleological argument or the argument from design, and also the anthropological or moral argument. It is true, however, that every argument which is advanced for the existence of God coincides at some point with the other arguments.

Dr. G. P. Fisher writes:

> History as containing at once a providential order and a moral order inclosed within it discovers God. Events do not take place in a chaotic series. A progress is discernible, an orderly succession of phenomena, the accomplishment of ends by the power of individuals to originate or combine. There is a power that makes for righteousness. Amid all the disorder of the world, as Bishop Butler has convincingly shown, there is manifested, on the part of the Power which governs, an approbation of right and a condemnation of wrong, analogous to the manifestation of justice and holiness which emanates from righteous rulers among men. If righteousness appear to be but imperfectly carried out, it is an indication that in this life the system is incomplete, and that here we see only its beginnings.[1]

The witness of history is emphatic. Great civilizations of the past have gone down in ruins, not through lack of intelligence, but as a result of moral decay.

"Righteousness exalteth a nation." Sin is accompanied by certain retributive and destructive forces which unarrested result in the downfall of nations.

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[1] "Grounds of Theistic and Christian Belief." By G. P. Fisher. Scribners.

Horace Bushnell more than a century ago set forth this argument from history in "The World Is Governed Supernaturally in the Interest of Christianity." This masterful discourse even today fits in with the best statement of modern apologetics.

We are familiar with the various lines of historical preparation which preceded the coming of Christ. The captivity and persecution of the Jews purged them of their idolatry. There was the dispersion of the Jews throughout the vast Roman Empire and also the building of the synagogues in which the first heralds of the gospel of Christ spoke, and there was the familiarizing of the people with the monotheistic faith. There was the Greek language ready to carry the rich contents of the gospel, and the Greek philosophy ready to assist in giving expression to the profound meaning of the gospel. The known world was bound together in the vast Roman Empire with its protecting laws and its famous roads running from Rome and connecting with all the important cities, over which the apostles and missionaries traveled in their work of evangelization.

There was universal peace, so that the new, fresh message of divine redemption was not lost in the din of war.

There was the collapse of ancient systems of religion and the confessed insufficiency of the world's philosophy. There were the ennui and the

satiety which followed the vain effort to satisfy life with physical pleasure and sensual indulgence.

> "On that hard pagan world
> Disgust and secret loathing fell;
> Deep weariness and sated lust
> Made human life a hell."

It was then, "in the fullness of the times," that Christ came. Was his coming at the opportune time accidental? Was not God working in history and making use of the nations of the earth to serve his redeeming purpose for all mankind? Was there not a providential order moving in the affairs of men?

There are dark pages in human history, where the footsteps of God were very dim, but "God is on the field when he is most invisible."

There are the Dark Ages of chaos in Europe, and the dark days of the carnage wrought by Napoleon, and the dark days of the war of the Revolution, and of the War between the States, but these dark days are lighted up with the glow of an after radiance. Victor Hugo says in his account of the Battle of Waterloo: "Was it possible for Napoleon to win the battle? We answer in the negative. Why? On account of Wellington, on account of Blucher? No; on account of God. Bonaparte, victor at Waterloo, did not harmonize with the law of the nineteenth century. Napoleon had been denounced in infinitude, his fall was de-

cided. Waterloo was not a battle, but a transformation of the universe."

Dr. J. H. Snowden, adapting Hugo's thought, writes:

> Was it possible for the Kaiser and his hosts to win the World War? No. Why? On account of Haig and Pétain and Pershing and Foch? No; on account of God. The Kaiser, victor in France, did not harmonize with the law of the twentieth century. He had been denounced in infinitude. The stars were fighting against him. The Marne was not simply a battle, but a transformation of the universe.[2]

We must avoid, however, a narrow interpretation of divine providence in the way of spectacular intervention and interposition. The Allies did not win because of swollen streams and favoring winds, since these manifested no partiality. They won not with big guns, but with morale, since God was working through their ideals.

The sovereign and immanent God is not a God who breaks into our world from the outside in the way of signs and marvels, in which a favoritism is shown which miraculously protects the good and destroys the wicked. This imperfect interpretation of God brings heartbreaking perplexities in the attempt to give a solution to the problems of life.

The God who is immanent in all the agencies and processes of the world is not working narrowly by a method of partialism, but he is pursuing the meth-

[2] "The Personality of God." By J. R. Snowden. The Macmillan Company.

od which can only produce and protect the highest spiritual values and move the world onward to its spiritual goal. This we may believe to be the plan of

> "That God, which ever lives and loves,
> One God, one law, one element,
> And one far-off divine event
> To which the whole creation moves."

III

An argument which has increased in strength in the light of modern knowledge is the argument of *Consensus Gentium*. In simple terms it is the argument from universal consent, or the universal instinct of humanity for the divine. It does not appear reasonable to believe that this persistent and ineradicable instinct is a delusion and a deceit. It appears improbable that practically the whole human race should be held in perpetual delusion. The familiar declaration of Lincoln has its application to the question before us: "You may fool some of the people all the time, and all the people some of the time, but you cannot fool all the people all the time."

Man is by nature religious. Does the highest faculty in man find itself without any counterpart in reality? Is man's nature true in the realm of physical powers and instincts and false in the realm of the spiritual?

Are the instincts of the lower animals practically unerring and reliable for guidance, and the religious

instincts of man, when they would lead us to God, the home of the soul, so delusive that they lead us only into a fog bank? We are given the incident of the South Sea sailors capturing a large tortoise off the coast of St. Helena. A storm arose just before reaching England and the tortoise was among the objects thrown overboard. It had been tagged, however, and some weeks afterwards was found on its native beach of St. Helena. Shall we believe that this universal religious instinct existing in every stage of human development, and which missionaries find awaiting them in the most debased tribe, is a mere will-o'-the-wisp. a false light which leads nowhere?

Is man deceived only when he follows the guidance of this highest and noblest instinct?

There is given to us the Parable of the Two Chicks. The two chicks were housed in eggs which lay side by side under the warm, sheltering feathers of the mother hen. They had reached the stage of growth when there came to both of them a strong impulse to break through the shells. A conversation took place through the thin shells which separated them. One was an agnostic chick and the other a Christian philosopher.

The agnostic chick said: "I feel an almost irresistible impulse to break my shell to-day. I have an inward assurance of light, air, food, a larger world, with a wider expanse of beauty and a freer realm of life. But since I have never seen and do

not know of the other world, it would be a very foolish thing to tear down the only house I know anything about. I will take counsel of prudence and not break through this shell." The chick that was a Christian philosopher said: "I do not know anything of any world outside this shell. But an instinct burns within me that tells me to make the venture, that there is a life beyond, and that, anyway, to remain here at last means death. I do not see how feet, wings, eyes, and bill are to come into play, but there comes the call of a larger life with boundless horizons, so here goes for the venture."

A beautiful little chick was soon basking in the sunlight. The busy housewife came out to look after the chickens and found in the deserted nest a single egg. She cracked it with her thimble and there lay before her the stiff, dead body of the unhatched bird. It was the agnostic chick.

It does not seem reasonable to believe that the instincts of the lower animals are reliable, while the strong, persistent religious instincts of the human heart are no more than the baseless fabric of a dream. This may be termed the unsafe argument from analogy, but it is a form of analogy which fits in well with a conception of a universe that is not constructed for the mockery of human aspirations.

The credit belongs to John Fiske in first giving expression to the idea which brings strong scientific confirmation to the truthfulness of man's religious

instincts as to their testimony for the unseen world of spiritual realities.

It was his knowledge of science and the processes of nature that confirmed his faith in the "Everlasting Reality of Religion."

In the lower realm of man's personality every power was made possible through its correspondence with the external reality.

Are we to suppose that this uniform process breaks down at the top?

It appears unreasonable to suppose that nature is true in matching the subjective with the objective reality, until we reach the soul and spiritual consciousness of man, and then there is no answering outside reality.

Our reasonable faith is that man's eternal spiritual aspiration and faith does not constitute the one dark exception, but that man's religious nature is itself evidence of the corresponding spiritual realities, and gives true testimony to the existence of the unseen spiritual world.

CHAPTER VII

THE ARGUMENT FROM SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE

The various logical arguments for the Being of God do not bring to the soul a satisfying evidence.

You cannot prove that a landscape is beautiful to one who does not love nature, or that a picture is beautiful to one who does not love art, or that a great piece of music is beautiful to one who prefers jazz or ragtime. All the great truths demand something more than logical proof.

John Wesley said:

> I experience the truths of the gospel in my own heart, and this I conceive to be the strongest evidence of the truth of Christianity. I do not undervalue traditional evidence. But no length of time can possibly affect the strength of this internal evidence. It passes now as it has done from the beginning directly from God into the believing soul. Traditional evidence is of an extremely complicated nature. On the contrary, how plain and simple is this and how level to the lowest capacity. Traditional evidence stands as it were a great way off, whereas the inward evidence is intimately present at all times and in all places.

When old Samuel Wesley lay dying, in 1735, he turned to his son John and said: "The inward witness, son, the inward witness, that is the proof, the strongest proof of Christianity." John Wesley in quoting the words long afterwards said: "I did not

at the time understand him, but the root of the whole matter lies just there."

The sure basis of religious certainty rests on two considerations:

In the first place, the spiritual faculties and powers are reliable in their assurance of corresponding spiritual realities simply because they discern them.

In the second place, the spiritual faculties and powers are evidence of spiritual realities for the reason that their origin and growth would not have been possible except in response to the spiritual realities by which they are encompassed. These will be considered in order.

I

Faith is being convinced of things not seen for the simple reason that it discerns them.

Our physical senses are generally and practically trustworthy. The eye is evidence of the light because it sees the light. This practical trustworthiness of the eye is not invalidated because a man in an intoxicated condition may not see at all, or may see double.

Two men in this condition went to a public speaking. One said to the other: "I do not see any speaker." The other replied, "I see two speakers." We are told of the man who was cured of the habit of drunkenness when he went home and saw two mothers-in-law.

The earth appears to the eye as a flat surface domed by the sky. You see a man at a distance in a balloon and he appears a foot tall. When clouds move across the surface of the moon, the moon appears to be moving. To all appearances the juggler throws a rope in the air and climbs it hand over hand, and the magician brings a barrelful of material out of a hat. But all of this does not destroy our common sense reliance on the eye. The ear is evidence of sound because it hears, and this evidence is not destroyed by the tricks of ventriloquism. The sense of touch is itself evidence of the material substance which it touches and is not destroyed by exceptional delusions. The reason is evidence of a rational order, because it detects mind in the world structure. The spiritual sense is evidence of spiritual realities for the reason that it discerns them. To deny the evidence of Christian experience is to believe that while God speaks the truth to us through the lower organs of the physical sense, he speaks a falsehood to us through the higher organs of the spirit. To deny the evidence of experience is to put the testimony of sensual minds above the testimony of spiritual minds; it is to put the testimony of the worst men above the testimony of the best men. If we are to deny the testimony of our spiritual intuitions of great moral certainties, then we may as well deny everything. The mother said: "Tommy, did not your conscience tell you that you did wrong?"

The reply was: "Yes, mamma, but I do not believe everything I hear." There is no chance for the man who regards the voices of his physical and sensual and selfish self as infallible voices, and the call of his religious and spiritual nature as the visionary fancies of a morbid spirit.

II

Faith is being convinced of things not seen, not only because it discerns them, but also for the reason that the faith faculty would not be possible aside from the world of unseen realities to which it has made response.

The eye is evidence of the light, not only for the reason that it sees, but because the eye could have had no existence but for the objective reality of a world that is visible. The eye was developed through the world of light and likewise the ear by response to the world of sound. The reason gives evidence of a rational world, not only because it detects it, but because the reason could never have developed apart from the objective rational world. So the spiritual sense is not only evidence of spiritual reality for the reason that it discerns it, but because the spiritual nature could never have been developed without the objective spiritual reality. There is the spiritual without to match the spiritual within.

If there is no loving God, so that the religious experience has no trustworthy counterpart, then

the religious part of human experience is radically unlike any other part.

This would be to claim that while the physical organs such as the eye could not have had an origin and development without an objective material world as their environment, the spiritual faculties have come to a strange growth with never a response from a world of spiritual realities. This is to deny that we live in an honest world. The tiger in the jungle and the cow in the meadow have each the advantage of us, since nature does not deceive them. The denial of the spiritual is to transform life into a hopeless riddle. It is to hold that the worst in our world rests on reality and is in conformity with eternal truth, while the best in our world rests on the rotten foundation of a falsehood. The only escape from such contradictions is an unshaken confidence in the reliability of our spiritual consciousness.

Some one has given the comparison of the response of the soul to the response of the needle to the pole. The pole throws the needle into a stir of activity. A circle of needles all around the earth pointing to one spot would indicate the presence of something in that spot influencing the needles.

A circle of souls around the earth and through the ages pointing in one direction is evidence of the reality of the unseen spirit. We cannot believe that the needles of all the compasses are arranging themselves around a powerless empty space.

The existence and universality of religious instincts and inspirations prove the existence of a spiritual universe. It is not possible that conscience, the sense of right and wrong, and the eternal distinction between them, could have sprung out of a spiritual void. We can never believe that life speaks the truth at the bottom and speaks falsehood at the top.

Long ago Pascal wrote: "The heart has reasons that reason does not know."

"In joy of inward peace, or sense
Of sorrow over sin,
He is his own best evidence,
His witness is within.

And not for signs in heaven above
Or earth below they look,
Who know with John his smile of love,
With Peter his rebuke."

"O world, thou choosest not the better part,
It is not wisdom to be only wise
And on the inward vision close the eyes;
But it is wisdom to believe the heart.
Columbus found a world, but had no chart
Save one that faith deciphered in the skies,
To trust the Soul's invincible surmise
Was all his science, and his only art."

III

There is the logic of the transformed life. Our own individual experience is confirmed by the testimony of the transformed lives of others. The

Christian has other evidence than his own inward life. He is one of a great multitude who have had a like experience and who add their testimony to his. Multitudes beyond number have tried the gospel method and have found peace in believing and in knowing that "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin." The new life, presence, and work of Father, Son, and Spirit, the forgiveness of sins, and all other Christian facts have become realities to them. In this number are included the best and noblest men and women who have ever lived. The keenest and most cultured intellects have found their highest satisfaction in this realm of religious knowledge and spiritual consciousness. Vast numbers of men have given their lives in attestation of their conviction that these sacred facts are what Christianity claims.

As the world has advanced in wisdom and knowledge, the number of believers has not diminished, but on the contrary has wonderfully increased. To-day, in the full light of this remarkable century, the number is greater than ever before. The most successful men in every department of human endeavor are in this number.

If good testimony is to prevail—that is, the testimony of men and women who in other matters are considered the most trustworthy—no system of scientific truth has anything like the evidence in its favor which Christianity possesses. There is no evidence stronger than the logic of the trans-

formed life. Christianity rests its claims and arguments upon the individual. Its irrefutable logic is consistent, Christlike character. No argument takes hold like that. It is worth more than all the written apologies of the centuries and all the elaborate volumes of theology. If argument has won its thousands, character and life have won tens of thousands. Bushnell tells us of a preacher who had among his hearers a learned but skeptical judge. The preacher prepared a sermon which he thought would be convincing. He was fearful lest the effect would be destroyed by a humble Christian who at the conclusion of the service testified to the saving power of Christ. That very night he received a message from the judge to come to his home. He found the skeptical judge ready through penitence and faith to enter the kingdom of God. The preacher ventured to remark that he thought his reasoning would convince him. The judge replied: "I had answered all your arguments to my own satisfaction; but when that humble Christian, whose life I knew, testified what God had done for him, I could make no answer." The one was Christianity in theory; the other was Christianity in life. The changed life is the supreme evidence of Christianity.

There are people who think the evidence would be complete if we could see visions and signs and miraculous manifestations, and read the name of God blazoned on the sky. If Christ would break

through upon our physical senses with a host of angels and begin his millennium upon earth, the evidence would be satisfactory. But greater than any spectacular marvel appealing to the senses is the miracle of a changed life.

The obedience of Abraham has brought more might into the race than any conversation with angels. The wrestling of Jacob until he prevailed with God has brought more victory to the race than all the outwardly marvelous events of his life. The choice of Moses, "To suffer affliction with the people of God," has brought more faith to the race and a larger manifestation of power of God than the marvelous visitation of plagues and the parting of the waters of the sea. The transformed lives of the Old Testament saints mean far more to the race as convincing evidence of God than all signs and wonders on earth and in heaven.

"An evil and adulterous generation seek after a sign." The greater blessedness of Christ is given to those who have not seen and yet who have believed. The high service of the prophets is in their unearthly courage and spiritual fellowship with God far more than in the forecasting of some remote future event. The sinless and transfigured life of Christ is far greater than all the eternal signs which he wrought. Simon Peter was rescued by angels. Stephen, the first martyr, came down to his death with no miraculous intervention. An evidence of God more convincing than cohorts of angels in the

skies was the power of God in the life of Stephen which enabled him to pray for his enemies: "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." I am not craving to see some marvelous kind of spectacular performance. It would not be healthful to the Christian life. I do not want to see angels now, nor ghosts. I might get scared. But to see a life transformed from selfishness to unselfishness, from worldliness to spirituality, from hate to love, from sin to righteousness, is the crowning evidence of the power of God in Christ Jesus.

The early Church did not argue so much as it lived. "The first heralds of the Crucified Redeemer wrought wonders, removed mountainous obstacles, transformed oppressed slaves into a cloud of witnessing heroes, and showed to the languid gaze of an expiring civilization the rainbow of promise that encircled the cross."

Martin Luther and the Reformation were stronger than a corrupt Church, because they brought back the lost experience, "The just shall live by faith." Early Methodism arose in the midst of a corrupt and skeptical age. Many books were written against the faith and in defense of the faith. Infidelity and immorality were overcome by the stronger power of the evidence of Christian living. The blasphemy of Bolingbroke and the skepticism of Chesterfield were more than overcome by the sweep of the Methodist revival. The tide of infidelity which resulted in the French Revolution

was turned back in England by the flaming evangels of a living Christian experience. The forces of evil can only be overcome in the present and future by the vital glowing faith which says, "We know that we have passed from death unto life." "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day."

IV

The heart and life of the Scriptures is that portion which deals with religious experience. This is forever beyond the reach of adverse criticism. This is that part of the Bible which is as fresh as the dew of the morning. This is not to depreciate the Bible, but to exalt it. It is a library of religious experience. It unveils the spiritual life of the various prophets and saints who wrote the various books. It kindles the aspiration for a like experience in the reader.

The test of religious experience was the fundamental factor in determining the Canon, and the experience of the highest saints comes to us with the note of authority. St. Paul in his address to the Athenians would bring men to the center of their own souls to find their lost God.

As you reach the culmination of this divine revelation, you find still the unfolding of religious experience. The marvelous teaching of Jesus was out of his own experience. The Beatitudes were

first lived by Jesus, before they were spoken. "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God."

Can we have any higher authority than that which comes through the highest experience? Do we want any higher authority than the divinely inspired consciousness and the revelation of the spiritual consciousness of Jesus Christ?

How can you get revelation except through experience? Even in the historical element God revealed himself through the deeds of men which made history. Can you conceive of any way that a divine revelation could reach the heart of humanity except through experience? The revelation of the Mormon Bible and the Mohammedan Koran is not conditioned on experience. We are not Mormons nor Mohammedans in our idea of the Bible—at least we should not be. A revelation that is to reach the heart of humanity must come from God through the heart of humanity. The universal human heart will never respond to any other sort of revelation. There could be no botany without experiencing the flowers. Astronomy exists only as the stars are experienced. The child knows the mother only as the mother reveals herself to the child through experience. We can only know God as we have an experience of God.

Some Biblical scholars have been more concerned about who wrote the twenty-third Psalm than in showing how the twentieth-century Christian can cultivate the blessed experience of divine companionship. Some men are more eager in their speculations as to the authorship of the Fourth Gospel than in teaching the world how they are to make the prayer of the seventeenth chapter the supreme aspiration of their own lives. We can only know the date and authority of a Psalm, if at all, by historical knowledge. But the humblest saint may know the truth of the Psalmist's words, "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered." You may not know how many inspired prophets had some part in the book of Isaiah; but you may know to a certainty, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

Our creed which we receive from others is useless plunder unless it is vitalized by a living experience.

It is not our theory of prayer that is important. We must be able to say, "I cried unto the Lord with my voice, and he heard me out of his holy hill."

It is pathetic to see a person seeking logical evidence for immortality in the hour of his crushing sorrow. The only satisfying evidence of immortality is to live the eternal life in this present world. Men believe in a heaven for the future when they have already found a heaven close at hand. We

may know that Jesus Christ rose from the dead, because he talks with us to-day.

Men try to understand the atonement, the significance of the death of Jesus as the dogmatic article of a creed. You can never understand it in that way. But go to the rescue of some outcast, bear the burden of the shame of the sin of others on your own heart, and then you will know something of the eternal heartache of God for a lost world.

The incarnate life of Jesus Christ would be but a dead fact stranded on the shores of time if it were not for the vitalizing power of Christian experience.

The doctrine of the deity of Jesus is only truly verified in experience. If you are not willing to surrender to Jesus as your guide, you will never know him as your God. We have insisted that men must first accept the dogma of his divinity, forgetting that we must first accept his character with his hatred of lust and impurity even in thought, his hatred of hatred, revenge, pride, and selfishness. You never realize the difficulty of being good until you start in to try to be good as Jesus was good. As you endeavor to attain goodness and lead other men to attain it, then in your insufficiency you know that you must have help above the human and that Jesus must work in you and through you. The divinity of Jesus Christ ceases to be a dead dogma and becomes a burning, living fact.

CHAPTER VIII

THE ARGUMENT FROM THE PERSON OF JESUS CHRIST

If the religious experience of the saints cannot be explained without the corresponding fact of the unseen spiritual world, we are much more powerless to explain the perfect religious experience of Jesus Christ aside from the realm of the spiritual. His surroundings were characterized on the one hand by social corruption and on the other hand by a cruel religious fanaticism. In so far as temporal environments were concerned, "He sprang as a root out of dry ground." The character of Christ was more marvelous than any words which he ever spoke, and more wonderful than any miracles which he ever wrought. When we believe the supreme miracle of his character, it is not difficult to believe that he worked miracles. Jesus himself in his personality is an evidence for God more convincing than all logical proofs.

The argument of Horace Bushnell is well known, "The Character of Jesus Forbids His Possible Classification with Men."

I

There is the miracle of his sinless life. His sinlessness is the irrefutable evidence of the realm of

the supernatural. Sinlessness is supernatural. It requires a supernatural Power to explain a sinless life. A sinless character raises Jesus above the highest representative of humanity.

It may be said that the only difference between the divine man and the good man is that one is perfectly good and the other is not. But this is all the difference in the world. What higher mark of divinity can we find than perfect goodness? A being with unlimited knowledge and vast power would not be divine. Jesus shows that the most important element in the nature of God is not omniscience nor omnipotence, but goodness. When Jesus wishes to remove the doubt of John the Baptist concerning his divine mission, he says, "Go, tell John the good things I am doing."

II

There is the accompanying fact of the unique and divine Sonship of Jesus. Jesus says, when speaking to men, "My Father and your Father." He lives in the constant consciousness of God. "No man knoweth the Father save the Son." Jesus is the perfect expression of the moral attribute of God, his goodness and love. He does not merely tell us what God is like: he shows us what God is like.

Jesus expresses his mission in universal terms. We cannot conceive of the Son of the one God having a mission less than a mission to universal

humanity. "He tasted death for every man." Jesus lays claim to both this sinlessness and Sonship. There is the utter absence from the character of Jesus of any trace of religious fanaticism.

The qualities of serenity and sanity are marks of his constant bearing and attitude. His intellectual temperament is free from every indication which accompanies the mind that is deceived.

His moral quality entirely precludes the idea that he would deceive others.

III

The conclusion appears to be inevitable that Jesus spoke with an absolutely divine authority. This is confirmed by the fact that Christ creates moral issues. He forces us from the intellectual to the moral and spiritual. His sinlessness and Sonship give to him an ultimate authority in the realm of the spiritual. Dr. C. R. Brown says:

> We value expert counsel in all the other fields of human interest. If Edison can speak as one having wisdom touching the problems of electricity, if Pasteur can guide us safely touching bacilli and the germ theory of disease, if Beethoven can pronounce a conclusive judgment touching what is most worthy in melody and harmony, then surely Jesus Christ is entitled to be heard with the greatest consideration touching all questions of morals and religion. When we study the quality of his utterance, the accuracy of his spiritual insight in all those fields where his claims can be submitted to the test of experience, the character of the life he lived in the eyes of men and the wholesome, abiding influence he has exerted on the higher life of mankind, we find no

one to whose judgment we might so well defer in matters of religious faith as this same Jesus.[1]

What Jesus tells us about God bears every mark of certainty and reality.

The man who rejects the authority of Christ must wander through the world with the consciousness of having turned away from the highest revelation that ever came to man. At last it is either to accept the loving Father whom Christ shows us, or to fall into a downright denial of the spiritual and to travel along the dreary waste of the "everlasting no," across the arid deserts of skepticism, to be plunged at last into the "seas of death and sunless gulfs of doubt." There is no midway station between Jesus Christ and atheism, between him and the hopelessness and despair of an absolute denial of all spiritual realities.

An old farmer was called in to decide a dispute between a believer and an infidel, and not wishing to offend either he said: "The first speaker believes in God, the second does not. The truth seems to lie between the two." But there is no logical stopping place between the kind of God whom Jesus Christ reveals, and no God. To reject the spiritual authority of Jesus Christ is to turn away from the highest and best.

There can be no higher law than the law of love.

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[1] "Why I Believe in Religion." By C. R. Brown. The Macmillan Company.

There can be no higher manifestation of love than the cross of Christ.

There can be no higher truth than the Fatherhood of God. There can be no stronger evidence of the divine Fatherhood than the incarnation of Christ. There can be no wider principle than the brotherhood of man. There can be no higher illustration of the brotherhood of man than the compassion of Christ. There can be no more perfect righteousness than the outer and inner transformation of life that belongs to the Christian faith. There can be no stronger power for righteousness than the power that comes from an obedient relationship to Jesus Christ. There can be no greater deliverance for men than salvation from sin. There can be no stronger power for salvation than the gospel of Christ. There can be no higher hope than that which springs from the promise of eternal life. There can be no stronger proof of the immortal life than the life and immortality brought to light in Jesus Christ. There can be no higher standard than the sinless life of Christ. There can be no stronger motive power impelling us to the standard of Christ than his incarnate life, atoning death, and resurrection. There can be no larger purpose than a gospel for the whole world. There can be no stronger proof of the universality of the gospel of Christ than its perfect response to every need and aspiration of the human heart.

IV

It appears evident that Jesus Christ, the most powerful factor in all history, the most potent in moral and spiritual influence, must be acknowledged as working in harmony with the universal spirit.

This influence has produced the New Testament with its twenty-seven pieces of writing.

It has produced the Christian Sabbath. It has produced Christian civilization. Lecky, who was very far from a partisan bias, wrote: "The simple record of three short years of the active life of Jesus has done more to regenerate and soften mankind than all the disquisitions of philosophers and all the exhortation of moralists."

The mighty impact of the influence of Jesus has produced the Christian Church, a living institution, a living monument of Jesus Christ in the world.

V

Jesus Was Truly Human

The early Church maintained the human nature of Jesus against Gnostics, Docetists, and Apollinarians. All of these maintained the deity of Jesus, but denied his humanity. When we make our appeal to the Gospels we find that physically he became weary; in his emotional life, there were surprise, compassion, indignation, joy, and sorrow. In his intellectual life, "he increased in wisdom." In his spiritual life there was the necessity of prayer,

a filial dependence on God: "The Father is greater than I," and "I can of my own self do nothing."

"But thee, but thee, O sovereign Seer of time,
But thee, O poet's Poet, Wisdom's Tongue,
But thee, O man's best Man, O love's best Love,
O perfect life in perfect labor writ,
O all men's Comrade, Servant, King, or Priest—
What *if* or *yet*, what mole, what flaw, what lapse,
What least defect or shadow of defect,
What rumor, tattled by an enemy,
Of inference loose, what lack of grace
Even in torture's grasp, or sleep's, or death's—
O, what amiss may I forgive in thee,
Jesus, good Paragon, thou Crystal Christ?"

VI

Jesus Was Truly Divine

1. *There is the approach to the divine through the human.* St. Paul and the Church after him started with the Christ who came from the divine realm and worked their way back to the human Jesus. But the first disciples came to the conception of the divinity of Jesus from his matchless humanity breaking forth into the confession, "Thou art the Christ of God."

Our own age is repeating the method of the first disciples. We arrive at his divinity through his perfect humanity.

We can conceive of nothing more godlike than perfect love, and nothing more divine than perfect goodness. We know that God dwells within Jesus

Christ in such an extraordinary measure that he is in a sense different from all others, the divine man.

At the same time Jesus was not conscious of a dual personality half-human and half-divine. He was God manifest in the flesh.

The old interpretation of Jesus is untenable that made of him a departmental being, now acting as God and now acting as man, now with the knowledge which belonged to God and now with the limitation that belonged to man.

Such a conception is bad theology and impossible psychology.

2. *There is the approach to Jesus as divine through experience.* The divinity of Jesus was not first of all a doctrine, but first of all an experience in the lives of the early disciples. He became the radiance and glory of their lives. The object of their faith was not in abstract opinions, but in the personality and life of Jesus Christ. It was impossible thus to believe in him, without believing more, without believing that he was a manifestation of God.

Jesus said: "He that believeth on me believeth not on me, but on him that sent me."

God had come and could come into human life, and they had seen "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." The divinity of Christ was not a theoretical and speculative affair, but a fact of experience. According to George Eliot, Adam Bede said: "I look at it as if the doctrine was like finding names for your feel-

ings." The doctrine of the divinity of Jesus was a statement of vital experience, the experience of finding God in Christ.

The divinity of Christ, so far from being a dead dogma, is something to be experienced and lived.

3. *The primary characteristic of the divinity of Jesus is perfect goodness.* It is not absolute power, it is not absolute knowledge. We do not regard power separated from character as divine. We do not regard knowledge, even though it reached omniscience, separated from character, as divine.

"He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father." So we find the perfect goodness and redeeming love of God incarnate in Christ.

The old mistaken conception of divinity proceeded on the assumption that God and man were essentially unlike. But this is a departure from the old Scripture that "God made man in his own image."

God and good are etymologically the same. The goodness of man is a mark of divinity, but not a perfect manifestation of divinity, because it is not perfect goodness.

Emerson has said: "A drop of water has the properties of the sea, but cannot exhibit a storm." So we all are partakers of the divine nature, but not in the same measure that Jesus was.

> "No mortal can with him compare,
> Among the sons of men."

Yet the God who was in Jesus is the same God who is in us. You cannot have one God and two kinds of divinity. It is the same indwelling deity in Jesus Christ as in man, but in what different measure! God was in complete and not partial possession of Jesus Christ, and this is what we mean by the divinity of Jesus. The perfect goodness of Christ is the primary mark of his divinity.

The highest saints have never laid claim to the perfect goodness of Christ.

With Jesus there was no remorse over any omitted duty, no expression of regret, no cry of penitence, no confession of any wrong, no prayer for personal forgiveness, no intimation that he even wished that he had made a different choice or acted differently, no suggestion that his conscience ever rebuked him.

"I do always the things that please him."

This spotless goodness was not only testified to by his friends, but it was the verdict of his enemies. The searchlight of the criticism of the ages finds no blemish on the perfection of his goodness.

VII

There is the contrast of the different views of Christ.

The lower view of Christ as held by Arians, Socinians, and Unitarians places the main emphasis on Jesus as a matchless teacher of righteousness and an example of purity and unselfishness. There are certain unique features which are withheld from him.

The lower view of Jesus has never worked in our world. The annals of missionary triumph and of the advance of Christian civilization have been attended by the higher conception of Jesus. This includes the estimate of the lower conception and more.

1. *Jesus lived a triumphant life.* He never once suffered a moral defeat. He was prepared to give the hopeful exhortation, "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

2. *He showed to the world a new way of life.* It was a way so distinct from the pagan idea and so superior to the Judaic idea that his early followers were called "the people of that way."

3. *He brought to humanity a convincing revelation of the love of God.* This revelation was made not merely through his teaching, but most of all through the spirit of his life and the sacrifice of his death.

4. *Jesus is the Saviour of men.* He is more than a great teacher. He is the power of God unto salvation. He meets the deepest spiritual need of man. He makes men victors in the moral conflict of life. When St. Paul cried out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death?" he found deliverance in Christ.

The question is well asked: "Can any one deny that his influence has been the chief factor in the moral renewal and spiritual transformation of men for the last nineteen hundred years?"

5. *Jesus has supreme authority as our Lord and*

Master. "To whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." He is not only our Saviour whom we trust for forgiveness, but our Lord whom we are to follow with unreserved obedience. There is to be allowed no uncertain note in his spiritual authority.

Dr. Cornelius Woelfkin writes:

> Jesus never said a word to correct misconceptions or to enlighten his age in matters of physical science. For such acumen men had a sufficient potential equipment. He would not be the minister of a renaissance in that field. But in things relating to God and man, sin and salvation, here our Lord speaks with the positiveness of a specialist.[2]

6. *There is the continued spiritual presence and power of Christ in our world.* Through centuries of Christian experience his promise has been verified, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." "The movement of the spiritual energy of Jesus Christ across the moral life of the race is like the movement of a planet."

The personal presence of Christ is the spiritual energy which brings the power of God into a human life. He is no absent Lord till he comes again, but he is with us and within us in a direct vital contact which is far better than any physical presence.

The faith that "God was in Christ Jesus reconciling the world unto himself" has been the energizing power of the Church for nineteen centuries, and

[2] "Expanding Horizons." By Cornelius Woelfkin. Cokesbury Press.

this faith is our hope for the spiritual victories of the future.

There are mysteries of the personality of Christ beyond our finite understanding. The incarnation is not only the manifestation of the uniqueness and preëminence of the divine man: it also reveals the essential likeness of God and man.

God perfectly revealed himself in man without ceasing to be God, and man becomes the full expression of God without ceasing to be man.

The poet expressed his complete dedication to Christ while yearning for clearer light.

> "If Jesus Christ is a man—
> And only a man—I say
> That of all mankind I will cleave to him,
> And to him will I cleave alway.
>
> If Jesus Christ is a God—
> And the only God—I swear
> I will follow him through heaven and hell,
> The earth, the sea, and the air."

We can but believe, however, that a better understanding of Christ removes the alternative, man or God.

Jesus was not God or man, but God in man. He was no demigod nor superman, an abnormal dual personality partially God and partially man, but the perfect revelation of the nature and character of God through man.

CHAPTER IX

THE ARGUMENT FROM THE PERSON OF JESUS CHRIST (CONTINUED)

I

Various influences have obscured the mind of Christ.

1. There may be first mentioned *ecclesiastical machinery* and the routine of formalism. Very good people become occupied with religious and Church activities and lose sight of Jesus. Women may become busily engaged in affairs of the missionary society and men in their official activities in connection with the Church, while Jesus becomes a dim figure on the horizon of their minds.

The Church has too often been the sepulcher of a buried Christ.

2. There is again the established order of things. The religion of formalism is always the ally of *things as they are.* Churchmen who receive profit from the established order are of course unable to see any viciousness in the existing order.

When we are the beneficiaries of special privilege in our economical social system, it is most difficult to interpret the mind of Jesus as it is related to the oppressed and unprivileged. Industrial oppressors say to the preacher: "Thus far shalt thou go and

no farther. You preach the simple gospel and keep away from the methods of business. Talk as sweetly as you want to about home and heaven, but don't talk about oppressive hours of labor."

Pioneer spirits who from age to age have endeavored to set forth the mind of Christ have had to break with the rigid conservatism of a large section of the Church.

3. Another obscuring influence consists in traditional notions and customs and creeds. These obscure the mind and spirit of Christ. Our theological systems, which were intended to interpret the mind of Christ, too often obscure his mind.

The Church has placed a mistaken emphasis on elaborate creeds. The teaching of Jesus placed major emphasis on life, and character, and service.

The Sermon on the Mount is an expression of the mind of Jesus concerning the individual life and all the possible relationships of life.

The Sermon on the Mount, the words of Jesus himself, has been overshadowed by the historic creeds, which constitute the speculation of men concerning the divine being and nature.

Orthodox tests and doctrinal standards take the place of the simple and clear requirements of Jesus.

There is a faulty theology which separates faith from conduct. There are churchmen who stress the forgiveness of Christ, but who claim that we cannot follow his example. There are professing Christians who are not troubled about the wrong spirit

of their lives, since they are saved by the imputed merits of Jesus.

I once heard a very intelligent preacher say, "No sin of the Christian can touch his own soul; it is imputed to Christ." The Revised Version drops the word "imputed." I cannot conceive of God as the author of a stupendous fraud by which a man is imputed to be righteous when he is not.

We have the type of theologian who is far more interested in what a man believes than in the way he lives, and correctness of creed has been more stressed than correctness of deed.

Another phase of our belief which has obscured the mind of Jesus has been a wrong conception of the Bible which has reduced all parts of the Scriptures to a dead level.

Some people are shocked at the declaration that not all parts of the Scriptures are of equal importance and inspiration. They think that the description of the tabernacle and of the wars of Joshua and the imprecatory Psalms are on the same high level as the parables of Jesus or his words in the fourteenth chapter of St. John's Gospel.

We would be saved from this harmful and false sort of orthodoxy, if we would accept the authority of Jesus himself: "It hath been said to you by them of old, . . . but I say unto you—"

Because the Church failed to interpret the Old Testament as a progressive revelation reaching its culmination and perfection in Jesus Christ, "the

light of the world," the Church has made a defense of polygamy and slavery and war. Theologians of Germany defended the invasion of Belgium by citing the extermination of certain tribes by the Israelites.

From the false idea of the equality of all the Scriptures, the Church has held that the burning of witches and religious persecutions were as divinely inspired as the great commission of Jesus to preach his gospel among all the nations of the world.

In matters aside from strictly creedal notions, the mind of Christ has been obscured by traditional notions and customs that do not touch the heart of the Christian gospel.

Some of these notions we have outgrown, but they illustrate the proneness of Church people to lay stress on incidental matters. In a former generation a woman who had been a lifelong Methodist was visiting in a neighboring State and when she came home again she had a flower in her bonnet, but the good Church people made so much trouble about the flower that she finally went into the Baptist Church. We now know that Christian love may be cherished in the heart of a woman even though she has a flower in her bonnet.

John Inskip was a Methodist apostle of perfect love for many years. In early life, as a member of the Ohio Conference, he had serious difficulty with a congregation. He had not broken any of the commandments, he had not preached heretical

doctrine—but he had come to the conclusion that it was perfectly right for men and women to sit side by side in the Sunday congregation.

The conservatives rebelled. There were gray-haired grandfathers who had never sat on the same side of the church with gray-haired grandmothers. It seemed impossible for solemn meditation. Of course, younger members of the congregation would be tempted to think more of adjacent and attractive companions than of the sermon. God had blessed the Church in the good old days.

All past experience was on the side of conservatism.

John Inskip remained firm and a great uproar followed.

My own recollection does not go back very far, but I remember a camp meeting at which the tent holders debated long and seriously as to whether the old rule should be enforced in the seating of the men and women.

II

The Mind of Christ: Negative Statement

1. *There was freedom from ignorance.* The wonder about Jesus was that he knew so much without having attended the school of the rabbis. If a little learning is a dangerous thing, then none of us are out of danger. But I am persuaded that even a little learning is not so dangerous as the same amount of ignorance.

It is our obligation to cultivate the mind. The memory of Jesus was stored with the literature of his people, and his mind gathered knowledge also from the Book of Nature and from fellowship with God the Father.

2. *There was freedom from pride.* "He humbled himself." Some are unduly inflated by knowledge and some by family pride. A man boasts, "My ancestors came over *in the Mayflower.*" "It was well they did, for the laws of immigration are stricter now," was the reply.

Luther says, "My father was a peasant, my grandfather was a peasant, all my ancestors were peasants."

3. *Freedom from prejudice marked the mind of Christ.* Honesty of mind is a high but rare quality. We are to sit down before a fact as a little child and strip our minds of prejudice.

An old astronomer who had the whole planetary system in a lecture was shown through the telescope a new planet. He was obliged to recognize it for the moment, but on the next delivery of the written lecture the students noticed that he had ignored the new planet. He had no room in his brain for a new fact.

There are people so prejudiced against anything new that they refuse to look at the new moon through respect for the old. However, to be consistent this type of person should also despise old things, for these were once new.

Prejudice arises from wrong conceptions of God, Jesus Christ, and the religious life. Religion is regarded as a subtraction from life, whereas it is a glorious addition to life. "I come that ye might have the more abundant life." Religion frees us from narrow, deformed, and shriveled lives.

There is prejudice in human relationships.

Men hold to a personal prejudice with no sort of foundation for it. You may hold prejudice against persons who never thought you a wrong, who never did you a wrong, and yet you fail to recognize the foul and wicked injustice.

"I do not like thee, Dr. Fell.' The real reason in many instances why you do not like Dr. Fell is because you did a wrong to Dr. Fell.

There is the bias of enmity which prevents you from doing an enemy justice. You question his every motive. You may be so prejudiced in favor of those whom you love that you cannot do justice. If your own little darling "lovey dovey" gets into trouble at school, you say it is the meanness of the teacher. If somebody else's darling gets into trouble, you say it is the wise discipline of the teacher.

There is sex prejudice. "And they marveled that he talked with a Samaritan woman."

This prejudice is a relic of heathenism. In India the cow is more sacred than the woman. In China, sorrow, limitation, and hardship are the portion of women. Even in Greece woman had no rights and was little better than a slave.

But in Christ Jesus there is neither male nor female. There is an increasing democratic spirit which will at last result in justice to woman. The lords of creation once argued that only their colossal brains could receive a higher education, but we know better now.

Why should not a woman clerk who does as hard and intelligent work as a man receive equal pay? What about the woman school-teacher who does an educational work equal to man?

There is social prejudice. "And they marveled that he talked with a Samaritan woman" against whom social ostracism existed.

Jesus sees the true self which sin cannot destroy and the divine possibility which grace can restore.

But we make our false distinctions and raise our cruel barriers.

Carlyle's main purpose in "Sartor Resartus" is to show the value of our common manhood after the clothes and all outward accessories are discarded.

There is sectional prejudice. "And they marveled that he talked with a Samaritan woman," because she lived north of Jerusalem.

Jesus was against sectionalism, since it is a virtual denial of brotherhood.

Sectionalism and provincialism belong to the same brood of evils as narrow nationalism. There are too many Northerners who are ready to raise

the incredulous question, "Can any good thing come out of the South?"

I am more concerned, however, with the attitude of my own section. A prominent Southern minister claims that he was grown before he knew that "damn Yankee" was not one word. There are some considerations which should lead us to lay aside sectional bitterness.

In the first place, most of the Yankees who fought in the War between the States are dead, although it is true that they still present a strong showing on the pension roll. But the present generation should not be held responsible for any grievances that we may have against a former generation. In the second place, the present intermingling of population makes it more difficult to maintain our sectional feeling. The North comes South and the South goes North. In the last few years the great highways and railway lines of the country have been constructed from North to South. Again, this increased intermingling results in increased intermarriage. We need to reckon with the fact that we are very likely to have a Yankee son-in-law, a Yankee daughter-in-law, or even a Yankee mother-in-law. It would be a queer predicament to have to dislike your own mother-in-law. We can very conveniently dispense to-day with the belated minds who continue to fan the flames of sectionalism.

We are one people, one country, with one interest and one destiny.

There exists sectarian prejudice. "And they marveled that he talked with a Samaritan woman" who did not hold to the Jews' religion.

The outstanding fact about the world to-day is that it is still a world of deep chasms and huge barriers between the Churches. Sectarian prejudice is next in bitterness to race prejudice. It has spilled more good red blood and wasted more good black ink than almost any form of human alienation.

There is the violence of race prejudice. "And they marveled that he talked with a Samaritan." It required a miracle to convince Simon Peter that God was no respecter of persons. St. Paul was a world citizen, and, standing on Mars' Hill, speaking to the proudest people on earth, he said: "God hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth." Jesus Christ possessed the world mind, the world spirit, and the world compassion. With no high-power microscope can you detect in Christ the slightest trace of race prejudice.

4. *There was in Jesus a perfect freedom from selfishness.* Jesus Christ stands forever as the perfect embodiment of the unselfish spirit—"Look not every man on his own things, but also on the things of another."

Men are prone to be content with their own comfort and prosperity, and know little and care

less how the other half lives. There are people who derive more than half their delight in comparing their own good fortune with the wretchedness of other people, and thank God that they are not as other men.

The number of millionaires was doubled in the late war.

There are men who openly boast that they are going to look strictly after number one, and that it is no concern of theirs as to the general welfare of the community.

They have entered into the advantage of the sacrifice of others. Their very material prosperity has been made possible by the unselfish spirits who have made our civilization, while they are content to fatten in their own selfish greed. They need to be reminded that the grave worms will have their feast. There is continued speculation as to the reality of hell. The perplexing question, however, will intrude itself, If there is no hell, what are you going to do with the persistently selfish and mean-spirited people?

And Jesus spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully; and he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things

be, which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.

Eleven times the selfish fool uses the pronoun of the first person.

III

The Mind of Jesus: Positive Statement

1. The mind of Jesus is manifest in his disposition or temper. In Jesus there is the blending of all the graces and virtues, with no lopsidedness. Strength and gentleness were united in him; and along with the love which sought out the weak, there was the righteous anger, which flamed against the oppressors of the weak.

Jesus was as free from evil temper as from the disreputable sins.

Through the grace of Jesus Christ we may be gradually conformed to his own disposition and temper.

Temper is the very quality of our being. Temper constitutes at least seven-eighths of character material. If the temper is bad, then you are seven-eighths bad. People lightly say that they are all right except their temper—that is all right except seven-eighths of themselves.

I confess with shame that it was only after an experience of several years before I learned that it is absolutely absurd and foolish to carry on a controversy with a person who is mad. I know better now and I would no more try to reason with a

person who has lost his temper than I would carry on an argument with an exploding powder magazine.

If the conversation is continued, it will be a monologue. The other person can have the last word and all the words. I don't care to argue with anybody who is seven-eighths wrong. Evil temper, so far from being a trivial fault, is a manifestation of a selfish and unloving spirit. It works more havoc in human life than many of the so-called grosser evils combined. It throws sand in the delicate machinery of human relationships. It produces discord in the family life and leads to the divorce court. It saddens and blights the lives of little children.

Evil temper is inclusive of the works of the flesh: quarrels, dissension, rivalry, factions, and party spirit. Peace and harmony to some people are as tasteless as food without tabasco sauce. Evil-tempered people delight in a fuss or quarrel for the same reason that a man has who takes intoxicating drink. It is seeking a thrill or a kick. While of the two evils we are to choose neither; yet if I were compelled to make a choice, I would prefer to get up in the morning with a brown taste in my mouth rather than with a bitter feeling in my heart.

2. There is the mind of Jesus concerning the kingdom of God. We have held the kingdom as identical with future blessedness. We have made it identical with the Church and left untouched

vast areas of life. We have narrowed the kingdom down to the welfare of the *individual* soul, whereas the kingdom of God according to Jesus is *both* individual and social.

The kingdom comprises all of life's relationships and has to do with our industrialism, our militarism, with public health, with economic and political questions. It is the rule of Christ over all the realms of human life and human relationships.

3. *The mind of Jesus concerning God is clearly revealed.* We must think of God in terms of Jesus Christ. Theology has long contended that Jesus was like God. What we need to understand is that God is like Jesus, that the heart of God, the Father, is forever like the heart of Jesus Christ. We see in the compassion of Jesus Christ the eternal heartache of God the Father. We see in Christ's forgiveness of the sinner, in Christ's sorrow with the sorrowing, the eternal feeling of God the Father for each individual.

4. *The mind of Jesus manifests the filial spirit.* His Father is central in all his thinking and in all his doing. His words are pervaded with a sense of this relationship. He was manifesting his Father's likeness and calling his Father's other children back into the family relationship from which they had wandered. "I do always the things that are pleasing to my Father." He said at last: "I go unto my Father, and your Father." The man who knows nothing of the Father's love, feels no responsibility

for the Father's works, has no concern for the Father's other children, is something less than a Christlike Christian.

5. *The mind of Jesus was fraternal.* The fact that God was his Father carried with it the additional note that man was his brother, and his life was keyed to this dual note. In this brotherhood he recognized no barriers, no distinctions, save that the weaker members of the Father's family were his special care. It is impossible to think of Jesus as class conscious.

It is impossible to think of him as indifferent to the welfare of any brother-man. We must feel that this is the Christ spirit. And yet throughout the Church there are numbers of men and women who have named his name and profess to be his disciples who do not believe in human brotherhood in any real sense of the word. We are living in a world where ignorance, sin, poverty, and suffering abound. Even in the best communities life is not fair and just to all the people. But do we care? Would Jesus care? Our Elder Brother lived and wrought and died for the whole brotherhood. If any man does not share the spirit of the Elder Brother, he is none of his.

6. *The mind of Jesus expresses the spirit of service.* "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." There belonged to Jesus active, positive service in his Father's work. The Church has been content with negative ideas of goodness.

The person who has no bad habits is considered Christian. But according to Christ, there must be positive goodness. Those who were condemned in the Master's picture of the last judgment lacked the positive note.

7. *The mind of Jesus reveals the nature of sin.* According to Jesus sin is a malignant inward malady. It is an unsound mental attitude. It is disease of the spirit as tuberculosis is a disease of the body. Jesus says your sin does not consist in breaking outward rules of rites and ceremonies. It is an affair of inward life. From out of the heart proceed evil thoughts.

If your attitude is one of scorn and contempt and you do not believe in the infinite value of the human soul, there is the root of every violent deed.

8. *The mind of Jesus is a revelation of perfect love.* It is not love as a weak sentiment, but a love that suffers for others and sacrifices for others. It is a love too holy and high to cherish enmity toward other people and contempt for other people It is a love which forgives wrongs. It is a love which sees the high possibility that may come out of low lives. It is a perfect love which casts out every kind of fear.

9. *The mind of Jesus mirrors with clearness the immortality of life.* Jesus never argued about immortality, he did not try to prove it. He lived even in this world the immortal life. He lived a life in such harmony and fellowship with God that

we cannot think of it as ending with the dissolution of the body. He lived a life of conscious superiority over the power of death, and said to those who follow him, "Because I live, ye shall live also."

10. *The mind of Jesus is expressive to the uttermost of faith and hope.* There are churchmen who expect that earthly history will close in a cataclysm of battle. There is no confidence in the power of God's Spirit, but in a spectacular physical appearance of Jesus. The hopeful mind of Jesus is against this false view. There is in his calm words no suggestion of failure. He is sure of the future, sure that love is stronger than hate and good is stronger than evil. He believed in the progress of good and in its ultimate triumph. He compares the kingdom to leaven and to a grain of mustard seed. "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven." "Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up." In the darkest hour that ever threw its pall over our earth he believed in the universal sway of his kingdom. He is chief of all saintly spirits,

> "Who, rowing hard against the stream,
> See distant gates of Eden gleam,
> And do not dream it is a dream."

The Christian Church is to be held to its own standard in Jesus Christ. One of the most embarrassing facts which have confronted the Church in its entire history is in the demand of the nations of the East that we live up to our own standard.

CHAPTER X

THE ARGUMENT FROM THE PERSON OF JESUS CHRIST (CONCLUDED)

JESUS, in the threefold description as the Way, the Truth, and the Life, is a perfect expression of the thought and will of God the Father.

The contribution which Jesus Christ presents to human thought is the most profound, the most interesting, and the most far-reaching that has appealed to the human mind. "He is the mightiest among the mighty, the holiest among the holy, and with his pierced hand he has lifted empires off their hinges and turned the stream of centuries from its channel."

Men are led to faith in Christ along different paths. He is not only a revelation of divinity, but a perfect embodiment of humanity, so that he makes his appeal to every variety of human temperament.

1. *There are some who are led to loyalty to Jesus through consideration of his character.* There is the perfect combination of contrasted qualities. He is strong and gentle, holy and compassionate. He is meek and lowly in spirit, and yet with a high self-estimate which says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life," "I am the resurrection, and the life." He possesses more than a prophet's indignation against sin, and yet he was the companion and

friend of sinners. He is the supreme Head of humanity and is also accessible to the lowliest among men.

Among the greatest of the Old Testament characters, there are none who can compare with his moral and spiritual grandeur.

In the New Testament, there is no apostle nor saint that can lay claim to his perfect sinlessness.

2. *There are those who are led to Jesus by the unique grandeur and originality of his teaching.*

(1) His message is marked by a new and fresh insight. The kingdom of God is spiritual in its nature. The Fatherhood of God is made the central doctrine. Jesus shows the dark hideousness of sin, the freedom of forgiveness, and the supreme value of man.

(2) There are the range and universality of the teaching of Jesus. He was an Oriental, but appeals to the Western mind. His words find response among savage tribes and the most highly civilized nations. The simplest minds and most cultured intellects are alike comforted and strengthened by his words.

(3) There is the finality of his teachings. "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."

(4) There is the vitality of his message. His words are spirit and life, and pour iron into the blood. St. Paul testifies: "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

(5) Jesus exemplified his own teaching. There was no disharmony between his life and his doctrine.

(6) The teachings of Jesus meet the pragmatic test. He submits his teachings to the practical test, "By their fruits ye shall know them." Every other system of thought has been shaken. It has been said that his name alone came out of the World War untarnished. Agnosticism, atheism, materialism, militarism, positivism, and rationalism have all been weighed in the balances and found wanting. In him is the only hope of a new social order. In him is the only hope of saving and stabilizing the world.

3. *Some find their way to spiritual salvation through the cross of Christ.*

> "When I survey the wondrous cross
> On which the Prince of Glory died,
> My richest gain I count but loss,
> And pour contempt on all my pride."

The impression is not to be received that the cross does not enter into the faith of all Christians, but that some are first attracted to Christ by the cross.

4. *The convincing evidence of the resurrection of Jesus is the path by which others find their way to a saving faith.* The power of the supernatural is nowhere more convincingly manifest than in the resurrection of Jesus from the dead.

5. *The consideration which exercises the most potent influence in attracting other types of mind to Christ is the realization of his power in the world and in the*

lives of men to-day. The fact is that no events of the past in connection with Jesus, whatever the weight of the historical evidence, would very long hold any sway over the minds of men, if he were doing nothing in the world to-day.

We are not to infer, however, from the different approach to Christ of different temperaments, that the Christian life is not to appropriate a measure of all the wealth of the Christian faith.

"I am the way, the truth, and the life." We must beware of lopsidedness. Merely to stress religion as a way, as conduct, as morality, and to omit the element of truth and life, is to reduce religion to the coldness of an iceberg. William Watson describes this type in a picture of the Church:

> "Outwardly splendid as of old;
> Inwardly sparkless, dull, and cold;
> Her strength and fire all spent and gone,
> Like the dead moon, she still shines on."

There are others who emphasize the truth. With these Christianity is merely a doctrine, while conduct and experience are largely overshadowed. A rigid dogmatism has very little attraction.

There is yet a third class who make of religion a spiritual experience, an emotional glow, a religious fervor, while the truth is a vague shadow and conduct and morality are shifting and hazily defined.

A mystical type of piety without definite doctrine and without an authoritative code of morality falls easily into antinomianism, and a sudden descent is

frequently made from the thrill of an unguided religious fervor to the thrill of an unrestrained sensuality. Religion must be all three, the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

I. "I Am the Way"

There is doubtless the idea in this declaration that Jesus is the way to God as expressed in the following: "No man cometh unto the Father but by me."

But Jesus is not only the Way to God; he is the Way of God for a human life, a manner of conduct which is in perfect harmony with the Will of God.

The early Christians were known as those of "The Way," those who live in a different way.

The Christian disciple must habitually be more loving, more generous, more unselfish, more morally courageous than others. The distinctive Christian spirit consists primarily not in doing new things, but in doing old things with a new spirit; not in doing uncommon things, but in doing common things with an uncommon spirit; not in doing extraordinary things, but in doing ordinary things with an extraordinary spirit.

Christian distinctiveness is not something to take the place of ordinary life, but something that is to dart through and make incandescent the common life as the electric current makes incandescent the wire.

There is a growing conviction that the Way of Jesus is the only practicable way—not merely a way

to a future heaven, but the only way to live on this earth with all of its complex relationships.

We are told of a preacher who proclaimed that the ideals of Jesus should control every part and phase of our human life, and that application should be made of these ideals to actual conditions. A hearer came up at the close and protested against the teaching as impracticable and dangerous. The preacher said, "But it is in the New Testament." The objector replied, "Never mind the New Testament." There are doubtless many Church members who, aside from the same bluntness, virtually say the same thing. But these are the type of people who in reality are impracticable.

The individual who is beaten, defeated, and crushed by opposition to the eternal laws of God discovers that the way of the world is not practicable. No achievements in the realm of the material can satisfy. The way of the world, with absorption in business and money and pleasure, leads at last to despair. It will not work.

The way of Christ in industry is the only way that will save society from the hate and destructiveness and waste of class strife.

The government which does not recognize the validity of the Christian social ideal will go to the rocks at last.

Christianity is to give a new soul to government, a new conscience to politics.

In the United States there is a slow but sure

rising tide of impatience with a narrow and selfish nationalism. It was this false ideal of patriotism which precipitated the World War, resulting in the destruction of millions of human lives.

The way of Christ is the only safe way.

II. "I Am the Truth"

Human life must have the steadying and strengthening power of a belief in the central and eternal verities.

Jesus is the truth about God. In the canonical Gospels, God is called our Father one hundred and eighty times. Jesus spoke with a "timeless voice to the permanent needs of men."

Jesus speaks the truth about God. More than this, Jesus lives the truth about God, and in his incarnate life reveals to men the fatherly love of God. This is Christianity's heart.

As we believe the revelation which Jesus makes of God, all the lesser items of Christian doctrine can bring to us no permanent confusion. As we believe that Jesus is the truth about God, life takes on a calmness, a serenity, and a power which can be attained in no other way.

Jesus is the truth about man. Jesus not only speaks the truth about man; he lived the truth about man, and in his incarnate life reveals to men the worth and possibility of man.

Jesus makes a transvaluation of all values. A part of our earthly wisdom in the material realm

consists in placing the correct prices on things. Jesus in the higher realm of values made a new estimate. "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

As we accept the truth which Jesus brings to us about man, the truth of immortality follows as a necessary postulate. Since God is a loving Father and man is a child of God capable of fellowship with God, we cannot think ourselves back to dust.

Jesus is the truth about man's relationship to man. Jesus not only speaks the truth about this relationship; he lives the truth, and in his incarnate life reveals to us what man's relationship to man must be.

There is in the claim of Jesus, "I am the light of the world," the declaration that he is the light on the complex and manifold relationships of men.

Jesus not only reveals the truth of God's love, but he possessed an unfailing faith in the power of love. He believed that the world was so constituted as to be governed by love. He believed that the behavior of the world would swing into line and support the venture. He believed that love was mightier than violence and more irresistible than logic. His experiment is not yet completed, but we know that all other methods have failed and are failing and must be thrown to the scrap-heap. If love cannot win, there is no other power or principle that can win.

III. "I Am the Life"

Men have tried to find religious certainty in an infallible Church, but this external prop has been broken. Men have tried to find religious certainty in a mechanically inerrant Book, but this theory has been rudely shattered.

Men have endeavored to find religious certainty in the light of their own reason, but this is a flickering and changing light and becomes too often a will-o'-the-wisp.

It is when the soul of man meets the life of God in all the glorious wonder of a personal experience of religion that certainty is found. "One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see."

The craving for religious certainty has been the aspiration of saints, "O that I knew where I might find him!"

1. *There is a desire for the same kind of evidence as obtains in the physical realm.* But we shall not find God with the microscope nor the telescope. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Religious realities are discerned by faith and not by sight. This kind of certainty would destroy freedom and moral character. If God should blazon his name in the sky, the human mind would be obsessed and the will overborne. There would be no room for the venture of faith and courage.

2. *There is a fondness for visible supports.* There is, however, a sense of uneasiness that goes with a visible foundation. If I believed that the earth rested on Atlas and Atlas on a rock, I would be afraid that the shoulders of Atlas would give way or the rock would slip from under him. We are more secure because the earth does not rest on a visible support. The stars do not fall, though they are not supported by visible pillars. They are held in place by the invisible force of gravity. Efforts on the part of Churchmen to find a firm foundation in an infallible, visible Church, and frantic efforts on the part of other Churchmen to find the foundation of their faith in an absolutely inerrant book, where even the vowel points are divinely dictated, have resulted in a constant sense of uncertainty and uneasiness.

3. *There is the effort to attain to a conviction of certainty through logical arguments for the existence of God.* There is the argument in effect that the highest thought of man must be true, that the very idea of supreme perfection is evidence of its reality. There is the argument that the being of God is the only reasonable explanation of the existence of the world. There is the argument that the reality of God is the only reasonable explanation of man. There is the argument from the manifest works of design and purpose. These historical arguments with some change of form still abide in strength. But the spirit of man is not satisfied.

4. *The Christian evidence must rest on the broad base of man's entire personality.* The realm of emotion and feeling constitutes the large bulk of human personality. The demand for mere logical and intellectual proof that will bring satisfying certainty can never be realized. You perceive God; you do not prove him. All the great truths are incapable of cold, logical proof. They require the soul that is in sympathy with them.

There are those who feel that it is entirely visionary and mystical to hold that there may be conscious fellowship with Jesus Christ. This feeling is expressed in the moan of Palgrave:

"Dim tracts of time divide those golden days from me;
Thy voice sounds strange o'er the years of change,
How should we follow thee?
Comes faint and far thy voice,
From fields of Galilee;
The vision fades in ancient shades,
How can we follow thee?

Something of the same skepticism of the personal presence of Jesus is expressed by the familiar hymn in the words, "I should like to have been with him then."

In delightful contrast with this sentiment is the experience of Dr. Maltbie Babcock:

"I envy not the Twelve; nearer to me is He;
The life he once lived here on earth, he lives again in me.
Ascended now to God, my witness there to be,
His witness here I am, because his spirit dwells in me."

The poets are the greatest interpreters of life,

Johannes Scheffler writes:

"Though Christ a thousand times in Bethlehem be born,
If he's not born in thee, thy heart is all forlorn.
The Cross on Golgotha can never save thy soul;
The Cross in thine own heart alone can make thee whole.
Christ rose not from the dead—Christ still is in the grave,
If those for whom he died are still of sin the slave."

To the same effect are the words of Whittier:

"No fable old, nor mythic lore,
Nor dreams of bards and seers,
No dead fact stranded on the shore
Of the oblivious years.

But warm, sweet, tender, even yet
A present help is he,
And faith has still its Olivet,
And love its Galilee.

The healing of his seamless dress
Is by our beds of pain;
We touch him in life's throng and press,
And we are whole again."

Jesus as a fact of history becomes a fact of conscience, and then a fact of experience. This conscious spiritual experience is the Christian life with the power that belongs to life.

The life of the seed is the power which transforms the soil into flowers and fruit.

Christianity is primarily a life, and spiritual life is spiritual power. It was Mr. Huxley who said: "I protest that if some great power would agree to always make me think what is true and do what is right on condition of being turned into a sort of

clock and wound up every morning, I would instantly close with the offer." This picture of a hard, dry, mechanical power is not the Christian power. The Christian power is life, fellowship, experience. Even in human relations our weaknesses are immensely strengthened by fellowship with the purest and strongest among men. In the presence of some people we are at our best.

Fellowship with Jesus Christ is our life and power. St. John gives the secret of this power: "Abide in me, and I in you." St. Paul corroborates the same secret of power: "Thanks be to God, who always leadeth us in triumph in Christ."

"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

Through life in Christ we have the motive power for reaching the sublime and unearthly ideal which he sets before us.

With the immeasurable resources of Christ at our command, our shame is that we live our little weak, puny, fretful lives, and are not ashamed.

PART FOUR

THE FOUNDATION OF FAITH IN THE DIVINE FATHERHOOD

CHAPTER XI

THE NATURE OF DIVINE FATHERHOOD

The prayer of Jesus to the Father is that men "might know thee, the only true God, and him whom thou didst send, even Jesus Christ."

Along with the others, Philip had been patiently waiting that he might see God. "Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us." He doubtless thought that it would be a revelation to the senses, like the appearance to Abraham as he rested at the tent door in the evening. Perhaps he thought of the marvelous disclosure to Moses on Mount Sinai. Jesus sees that Philip thinks that the only way to see the Father is with the bodily eye in some majestic form, some dazzling light. He had been looking for wonders and signs. Jesus reminds him that in his whole life and character the Father is revealed.

1. *There are certain difficulties of belief in God as Father.* We live in a world of sin and shame and suffering. We live in a world where pestilence walks in the darkness and destruction wastes at noonday.

We live in a world where nature has her cruel and savage moods. There is the cruelty as well as the beauty of the world. There are not only flaming sunsets, silvery stars, and the silent sea, but avalanches and floods.

We live in a world of strife and war. We live in a world where the innocent suffer and the weak are oppressed.

We live in an age when the miraculous and supernatural do not break in on us. We live in an age when science has vastly lengthened out the age of the world, and brought to us some knowledge of the vastness of the universe. We live in an age when mystery rests like a weight of lead on the human mind.

2. *There is the difficulty of unbelief.* It is a healthful exercise for the mind to reckon with the greater difficulties of unbelief. We will either believe in God or we will not believe.

Let us see what is involved in unbelief. It means that we live in a mindless world. There is no such thing as thought inwrought into the structure of the world.

The astronomer was mistaken when he exclaimed, "I am thinking the thoughts of God after him." There is nothing but blind chance behind all visible phenomena.

The mind of Plato and the character of Jesus Christ are the strange products of an accidental combination of wandering atoms and electrons.

Revelation is impossible, since there is no one to satisfy the human thirst for a knowledge of the unseen. Science would be impossible, since science means the interpretation of an intelligible universe.

"Am I an atom in a soulless scheme,
My body real but my soul a dream?
Ah yes, ah yes, but how explain the birth
Of dreams of soul upon a soulless earth?"

The world with the stamp of intelligence upon it is a delusion.

If there is no mind at the heart of the universe, then there is no goodness. If there is no God who is good, then there is no place for religion. We should not pray, we should not worship, we should not aspire to divine fellowship. Religion would be as much out of place as revelation and science. Religion would be useless. It is like having eyes in a world without light and ears in a world without sound. Our distinctions of right and wrong, our horror of sin, our hunger for righteousness are but the upheavals of a disordered mind.

Nothing is more unreasonable than unbelief. It is easier to believe in all the fables and myths of antiquity than to believe that we live in a mindless and soulless world.

3. *There is the practical effect of our conception of God.* We have seen something of what is involved in a disbelief in God. There are also the hurtful effects of an unworthy conception of God. There is the humanist who would worship a deified race in the place of God. There is the Fundamentalist who would inclose God in the narrow channels of his own literalistic notions. There is the God of the bigot who is as cruel and relentless as the bigot

himself. There is the God of the sentimentalist who is so soft that he has no heart to enforce law, a god of grandfatherly indulgence.

There is the God on whom men call only in time of distress. There is the God whom people worship only when on dress parade on Sunday, a worship that acts as a salve on the conscience for the wrongs of the week days. The fact of central importance with each of us is our conception of God. We become like the God whom we really believe in and worship.

There is a false, anthropomorphic conception, "Thou didst think that I was altogether such a one as thyself." There is the idea of God as vainglorious, ambitious for praise, whereas we glorify God by revealing his goodness in our own character. There is also the pagan notion of divine jealousy. There is the notion of rivalry between divine and human love.

There is the interpreting of the divine and human as totally different. The Pharisees wanted a species of miracles of celestial wonder, without the human element. They sought for a God as unlike men as possible. The incarnation is the eternal affirmation of a likeness between God and men.

There is the hazy, vapory idea of God. He is a mere abstraction, a kind of shadowy principle instead of a person. The idea of God is a blur and there is no sense of responsibility.

I

There is the preëminent importance of a right conception of God.

1. *God is a Person.* The three elements of personality are intelligence, will, and feeling. The power of personality consists in the power to know, the power to act, and the power to love. We know that in the human being personality is not complete. It is the goal of the individual life. There are those who contend that the infinite God cannot be described by the same terms that describe the human. But it is only in God that we have the perfect personality, a personality that did not need to be developed by outside resistance, a personality that gives expression to perfect intelligence, perfect will, and perfect love.

2. *God is Spirit.* God is Spirit who pervades all life and the world. As a spirit, all the elements of the divine personality, intelligence, feeling, and will are everywhere present. We can escape God only by fleeing to God. "Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there."

3. *God is Father.* If God were only an infinite spirit, we might desire to escape him; but God is our Father, who seeks each of us with an individual love.

He is our Father who would lead us in our perplexity, shame us by his love out of our sinning,

and bear the burden of our sorrows and disappointments on his own great loving heart. He is a Father who seeks us when we go astray.

The Fatherhood of God stands out as the central fact even though a great many of your traditional interpretations pass away. I was told of a brother who thought the Christian faith would be gone if the whale did not swallow Jonah, and yet he was opposed to foreign missions.

Now the one fact above all facts that the book of Jonah is intended to teach is the universal compassion of God that could not be limited to the Jewish race.

II

There is the wide reach of the divine Fatherhood.

The exact significance of the Fatherhood of God is not always the same. It is unseemly that the gracious and inspiring truth of Divine Fatherhood should be a matter of sharp discussion. There is a rigid form of interpretation which seizes on isolated passages rather than the sweep of the entire revelation. A mistake is made in trying to make the term "Fatherhood" mean always the same.

There is the threefold meaning of the Fatherhood of God.

1. *God is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ in a closeness of relationship that belongs to no other.* When Jesus is called the Son of God, there is in the phrase a depth of meaning which implies a nearness that is unshared by any other of the human family.

Jesus in speaking of himself along with men never says, "Our Father," but "My Father" and "Your Father." It was for assuming this unique kind of Sonship that Jesus was persecuted and at last crucified. It was this unique divine Sonship that enabled Christ to be a perfect revelation of God. "The only begotten Son, who was in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."

2. *God is the Father of those who believe in him and obey him.* There is the special meaning in which God is the Father of the spiritual.

It has been said that there are no prodigal sons in the Gospel of St. John. He speaks altogether of the close relationship between God and the believing child. In this special and intimate sense God is the Father of those who in filial obedience respond to his Fatherhood. God is the Father in the sense of nearness to those who believe, because there is the continual spiritual paternity which reproduces in the child the spiritual qualities which belong to the Father. It is only the believing child of God who enters into the consciousness and experience of the Fatherhood of God.

3. *God is the Father of all men.* While God in the special sense is the Father of some because they are spiritual, he is the Father of all because they are spirits. There is a spiritual Fatherhood and there is a natural Fatherhood. There is a special Fatherhood and there is a universal Fatherhood.

God is the Father of all men, but all men do not

live as sons of God ought to live. We may be false to our relationship to God. We may be prodigal sons, disobedient sons, but sonship itself is indestructible. There are those who would make figurative the expressions that bear out the universal Fatherhood of God, and make literal the figure of St. John when he says to the Pharisees, "Ye are of your father the devil."

The inspired writer only means that in spirit and disposition they are all like the devil. But in reality the devil is not the father of anybody. It is an absurd notion. It is a monstrosity in theological thought.

The Jews believed that they only were the children of God. In the medieval Church all who were baptized were his children. All the unbaptized were outside the pale of mercy. Calvinism made the line invisible and said that only the elect were the children of God.

The Fundamentalists, who are very active at present, made an emphatic restatement of the limited Fatherhood of God. Some months ago, through the *Sunday School Times* as a mouthpiece, this declaration was made: "There is no such thing as the universal brotherhood of man. There is no universal Fatherhood of God. God is not the Father of all men. The natural brotherhood of human blood is the brotherhood of the family and the fatherhood of Satan."

The writings of both the Old and New Testa-

ments, covering over one thousand years, are made one book by the fundamental doctrine that man is the offspring of God, made in God's image.

The very meaning of humanity is sonship to God. Man is made in God's image. Man is related to God by virtue of his reason, his heart, his moral sense, his capacity of progress, his capacity of fellowship with God. A God whose personality consists of intelligence, feeling, and will has created spirits with a personality consisting of intelligence, feeling, and will; and this is divine Fatherhood. For God to produce a being like man means Fatherhood. God is Father to men and men are sons to God from the very fact that he made them, and made them like himself. Some one objects that if creation means Fatherhood, then God is the Father of the beasts of the field. But do the beasts possess the same elements of personality that belong to man and God?

God is the Father of all men, but not all men respond to his Fatherhood. All men are sons of God but not all men are living as sons ought to live. A man who is a son of God by nature may enter into his sonship and become a son of God in living faith and obedience.

God is always Father, man is always son, but the relation may be realized in full or not at all on man's side.

CHAPTER XII

THE EXPRESSION OF GOD THE FATHER THROUGH JESUS CHRIST

I

God the Father is revealed in Jesus Christ.

The words of Jesus tell us about God the Father. But if his revelation of God were limited to his teaching, he would only be the greatest among the prophets.

The works of Jesus were miracles of love and mercy which revealed the love and fatherly compassion of God. His words tell us what God is like. His works tell us what God is like. But more than his works, his personality reveals God; so that he could say, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." The prophets bring a revelation about God; Jesus brings a revelation of God. Here are the sons of the same father. The first has no particular resemblance to the father; the second is like his father in physical likeness and in traits of mind and character. The first son may give a description of his father; the second son is a description of his father.

Jesus is the perfect picture of God, the perfect revelation of the character of God. We have only to look about us in the world to find out that God is power. We see his power in every wind that blows,

in all the storms that rage, in all the lightnings that flash, in all the convulsions of nature that shake a world. We see his wisdom in the changing seasons, in the manifold designs of creation, and in the adaptation and correlation of his works. We see the stamp of intelligence on all created things, but we learn of the fatherly love of God in Jesus Christ. Apart from Jesus Christ there are perplexing questions that throw suspicion on the love of God. With him,

> "All partial evil is universal good,
> All discord, harmony not understood."

The revelation of Jesus Christ shows us that back of all the things that are seen there is the pulsation of a heart of universal love, and that there is no forlorn, forsaken, and fallen human life in all the world but is the object of the yearning and compassion of the Father of all mercies.

The Church has all along believed that Jesus is like God. It is a strange contradiction that we are so slow to learn that God is like Jesus.

A noted Christian woman said that as a child she had the most tender regard for Jesus, but a terror of God. The thought of being alone with God in the nighttime frightened her. A wise mother discovered her trouble, and one night as she leaned over her bed and tucked the cover about her she said, "My child, Jesus is the picture of God." Her fear forever passed away as she learned that God was like Jesus.

A Christian worker was visiting a widow who lay dying. She was poor and was leaving behind a large family of small and dependent children. Thinking to comfort her, the Christian worker began to talk to her about God.

The dying woman sat up with her dying strength, and with eyes that flashed indignation turned and said almost with a hiss: "Don't talk to me about God. I don't want to hear about God. God has been hard and cruel. I am afraid of him; I hate him." Exhausted, she lay back on her pillow. The startled Christian hardly knew for a moment what to do, but she began to talk to her about Jesus Christ, and immediately the light in her eyes softened. She turned and said: "Ah yes, I like to hear about him; he is different, isn't he? He was always kind and I could trust him with my children; but don't talk to me about God: I am afraid of God." That poor woman bluntly gave expression to what very many have felt and have not spoken.

We need to believe, not with a cold theory, but with a living faith, that God is like Christ. There is no God different from Christ. It is totally false that God thinks one way and Jesus another, that God feels one way and Jesus another.

The God whom Christ reveals is the only God there is, and Jesus came not to protect us from God, but to reveal God unto us.

A father was reading the Bible to his little girl and as he passed from the Old Testament over into

the New the face of the little girl brightened and she exclaimed, "O papa, God is so much better than he used to be."

But Jesus revealed to us in these short years what God is through all the years.

There is no tear that falls from any eye but God sees it, and no blow smites any child of his but God feels it.

We see in Jesus Christ the eternal atonement, the eternal heartache of God.

If you want to know how God feels toward sinners, then look upon the friend of sinners as he tells us of the joy in heaven over one sinner that repents. If you want to know how God feels toward a penitent sinner, outcast and forsaken, then listen to the words of Jesus to the woman who was a sinner: "Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more."

If you want to know how God feels toward a sinful people, then look upon Jesus as he weeps over Jerusalem, the doomed city.

If you would know how God feels toward an unwilling skeptic, then look upon Jesus and his patience with Thomas.

If you would know how God feels toward an unfaithful disciple, then read the interview between Jesus and Simon Peter by the shore of the Galilean Sea.

If you would know how approachable God is, read of the conversations of Jesus with Nicodemus and the Samaritan woman, and see how little chil-

dren came to him and were not afraid. If you would know how God feels toward his enemies, then let us hear the dying prayer of Jesus, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." Then for fear we might suppose that God is simply infinite indulgence and good nature and complacency, with no capacity for righteous indignation, let us hear Christ's denunciation of the Pharisees who devoured widows' houses and for a pretense made long prayers.

II

We are to accept the revelation of God through Jesus Christ as the working principle of life.

The process of theorizing and intellectualism and abstract reasoning never gets us anywhere. A venture must be made into no man's land before there is the sense of reality. At one time the theologians were much disturbed because Kant, the great philosopher, pointed out the imperfections of pure reason. He held that through practical reason man comes into the certainty of God, freedom, and immortality, and that it was possible to live and work until the doubts of the theoretical reason would be swallowed up in the joyful assurance and convictions that come from the practical experiment of faith.

We are to become scientific enough to experiment, and as we throw the whole weight of our lives on the assumption that God is our Father,

the experiment of his Fatherhood comes as an inexpressible glory to the soul.

When there is the actual movement of the whole life, "I will arise and go to my Father," then follows the joy of conscious fellowship.

The Fatherhood of God is not a view of God formed in the mind and defended by texts, but a living experience of God, as we live as sons of God ought to live. Donald Hankey said: "Religion is betting your life that there is a God."

The orthodox and evangelical Churches base the Fatherhood of God on the surest foundation, since it is the revelation of one who is in a preeminent sense the divine Son of God. The spirit of our lives has been inconsistent with our confession of faith, and as a rebuke to the Church various religious cults are preaching to us, "Therefore be not anxious; . . . your Heavenly Father knoweth."

We repeat Sunday after Sunday, "I believe in God the Father," and we repeat in prayer, "Our Father," and then go out into life with all the restless anxiety of orphans. Our hearts are hot and restless and the lines of care are drawn deep in our faces.

Our Church people to-day are not happy. Their lives are invaded by earthly cares, and they are anxious and perplexed about many things.

"If our faith were but more simple,
We would take him at his word,
And our lives would be all sunshine,
In the sweetness of our Lord."

If we would have full proof of God the Father, we must put him to the test, and find that he will respond to our confidence, and the experiment will result in a glorious experience.

"My God is reconciled;
His pardoning voice I hear,
He owns me for his child,
I can no longer fear;
With confidence I now draw nigh,
And, 'Father, Abba, Father,' cry."

III

There are certain consequent beliefs which of necessity follow the divine Fatherhood.

1. *There is the relation of sonship to God.* We are to make response to the fatherly love of God. We are not to presume on God's Fatherhood. We are to raise the all-important question, "What kind of sons are we?"

To really live as sons of God means that we will do his will. We not only say "Our Father," but "Thy will be done."

To live as sons of God means that we become like God, reproducing in our own spirits the high qualities that belong to his character.

A true son cares more for the approval of the

Father than for all the outside world may think or say.

2. *There is to be the brotherly relation with all men.*

When we say "Our Father," we call all men our brothers. There is not only the universal Fatherhood of God, there is the universal brotherhood of man. Christian brotherhood means that we are not under the sway of race prejudice. It means that the strong shall bear the burdens of the weak.

When Bishop C. B. Galloway, a prince in Israel and a saint of God, died at his home in Jackson, Miss., the colored people sent in a beautiful floral offering with the request that they might be allowed to follow the remains of their distinguished friend to his last resting place in token of their affectionate regard. Our beloved Bishop felt that the colored man is a brother for whom Christ died.

When Egerton Young was among the Red Indians of the Hudson Bay, he was telling them of God our Father. A chief stood up and asked, "Is he white man's Father?" The missionary answered, "Yes." He asked, "Is he red man's Father?" The missionary answered, "Yes." "Then they are brothers." The answer was, "Yes." Then asked the chief, "Why did not our white brother come and tell us this before?" The same question of reproach could to-day be asked by the black man, red man, brown man, and yellow man: "Why do not our white brothers tell us about God?"

There has been of late in our own country a

shameful and disgraceful stirring up of race prejudice.

If capital and labor are ever brought into harmony and their strife healed, it will be when capitalists and laborers realize that they are brothers of one Father.

We can only render acceptable service unto God and win his commendation when we help some child of his who is our brother.

If I wanted to offer the greatest personal offense to you, I would do an injury to one of your children. There is no more certain way to bind some one to you in a deathless love than to help his child in some need or emergency.

Would you gain the favor of God? Then help some of his children. This motive will cause us to commit ourselves with all that we are and have to the service of the benighted children of God. It is this that keeps us from merely guarding the sacred fire and that sends the Churches forth as torch-bearers in a world of darkness. The Church is wealthy enough to send the gospel to every dark corner of the earth. Heine, the brilliant Jew, was once silent at a banquet. The Christian hostess asked the reason of his silence. He replied: "I am trying to solve a problem. As I look at these gold dishes and luxurious signs of wealth I am wondering what you Christians are going to do with the camel question."

I suppose there are professing Christians who

think that Jesus did not know what he was talking about when he said, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven."

Christians must teach the world Christian brotherhood, and they must teach it by acting toward each other as brethren, and by acting as brethren toward the multitudes who know not God.

3. *There follows from the Fatherhood of God the almightiness of his power.* It is no accident that in our ancient creed the two ideas are used in conjunction: "I believe in God the Father Almighty."

This is the statement of the omnipotence of love. The power of God is in his fatherly love. There are orthodox infidels who worship a God of absolute force and whose sole idea of strength is physical force. They do not expect the millennium until Jesus becomes a military commander and his enemies are conquered by brute force.

We do not really understand the power of God until we perceive that the purpose of God is brotherhood, the creation of a Christian society, and the making of a united family of human beings.

Men grow eloquent over the thought of the unity that was produced by the World War. It was a fragile unity, because it was not the unity of love.

God is love, and love is the great spiritual magnet that is to unite at last the children of God who are scattered abroad. It is the suffering love of God

in Jesus Christ that is to draw all men unto himself.

We are to commit ourselves to this divine truth that the supreme power of man and the omnipotence of God are in the love that sacrifices. The almightiness of God is in the fatherly love of God, a love that suffers.

It is this almightiness of Father-love that is to win the world. There is no place for hopelessness or despair. Evil has the appearance of tremendous power, but in the long run it has not the ghost of a chance.

"If all the might of the nations leagued
Were massed in a host prepared to fight,
They would be as weak as a broken reed,
Compared with a single shaft of light.

Your swords of steel and your iron ships
Are shams that keep you in darkness still,
But Light and Love and Truth are powers
That work and weave the Eternal Will.

But power is mine, and is mine to give,
Ever I give it with my heart's blood;
Nothing can stay it—the power of Love;
Lift up your eyes, and behold your God.

The night is passing, the hills grow gray;
Awake! and hark to the watchman's cry.
Love comes—I come; and the eastern way
Splits into splendor as God draws nigh."[1]

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[1]From "I Believe." By G. A. Studdert-Kennedy. George H. Doran Company.

4. *We can only understand sin in the light of the fatherly love of God.* There is no sin that has the dark depth of a sin against a father. We recognize this in the human relationships.

Fatherhood does not remove the ethical principles; it strengthens them.

To sin against a God who loves us with a fatherly love is more than sinning against a sovereign or sinning against law. God the Father has an intense hatred of sin, because it spoils the life of his child. It is the suffering love of God that reveals all the dark colors of sin. Whatever may be the unexplored meaning of that atonement, we know that it means that the sin of man brings suffering to God. We know that God, who gave his Son to save us from sin, will freely forgive our sins. So in the Apostles' Creed we say not only, "I believe in God the Father," but, "I believe in the forgiveness of sins."

Some years ago there went out from the home of an old Methodist preacher a wayward daughter, who brought reproach to the family name. At last she grew weary of the ways of sin and a message was brought to the father that the daughter wanted to return home and wanted to know if she would be forgiven.

The old father, whose yearning compassion had followed his child through all her wanderings, said with streaming tears and trembling voice, "I have suffered too much not to forgive."

5. *There results inevitably from Fatherhood the*

reward of immortality. "Because I live, ye shall live also." We cannot conceive of a Father who would strike his children down in deathless silence. Immortality is as certain as the fatherhood of God.

> "Thou wilt not leave us in the dust:
> Thou madest man, he knows not why;
> He thinks he was not made to die,
> And thou hast made him: thou art just."

6. *The mission of our life is to be interpreted in the light of God's Fatherhood.* Jesus says, "I have manifested thy name." He says to us, "As the Father hath sent me, even so send I you."

We are to be, according to the measure of our capacity, the revealers of the fatherly love of God to men. Men will know not God through books of doctrine or systems of faith, but through his love incarnate in human life. It is only this love of God permeating the human personality that shall convince the unbelieving and disobedient of the love of God the Father, revealed in Jesus Christ.

IV

The fact of God's Fatherhood is the determinative principle and test of all doctrine and of all interpretation. It is the central sun whose light shines upon all the varied doctrines and duties of men. It is the certain test which determines the rightness or wrongness of all creeds, and of all deeds. The God whom Jesus Christ reveals is the answer to all one's questionings which need to be answered.

"I say the acknowledgment of God in Christ,
Accepted by thy reason, solves for thee
All questions in the earth and out of it,
And has so far advanced thee to be wise."

Whatever in human systems of belief is out of harmony with the Fatherhood of God is thereby discredited. What we think of God is vastly more important even in practical life than all of our boasted achievements in all other realms of life and thought.

The history of civilization and the history of religion are vitally related to each other.

To believe in and worship an immoral and unholy God cannot fail to degrade and debase the worshiper. On the other hand, to believe in and worship a God of infinite love and holiness is to fill the soul of the worshiper with aspirations after the moral qualities of the God whom he worships. The same relation that exists between a worshiper and his God applies in the main to a nation and its God.

Men, religions, Churches, nations may all be weighed accurately in those moral and spiritual scales which register high and low conceptions of God.

In our interpretation of the Scriptures, to allow the light of God's Fatherhood to shine on all the pages will bring to us a sanity and correctness of understanding where a minute exegesis of the root meaning of words and of obscure phrases will produce only endless quibbling and the confusion of knowledge. Every portion of the Scriptures is to be brought to

the touchstone of the determining principle and test of God's Fatherhood.

The Fatherhood of God is the central truth of Christianity. God is the kind of God whom Jesus revealed not only in his words, but more than all in his personality and in his relationship with men.

If we are to have a Christian theology, every doctrine which we hold must harmonize with the revelation of God the Father in Jesus Christ, and all beliefs must be brought to the light of the central sun of divine Fatherhood. Nothing must be held which contradicts the fatherly love of God. All crude and cruel conceptions of divine election must be discarded. Our interpretation of suffering and sin and even retribution itself must be in accord with divine Fatherhood.

We must apply this determinative test with confidence and without fear to all the doctrines of religion.

There is perhaps no doctrine which theologians have been less prone to harmonize with divine Fatherhood than the doctrine of the Atonement.

It is very fortunate that we are saved by the atoning love of Jesus Christ rather than by human theories of the atonement.

False theories are still employed in sermons as they were once employed in song.

This is a stanza by Isaac Watts:

> "Rich were the drops of Jesus' blood
> Which calmed God's frowning face,

That sprinkled o'er the burning throne
And turned the wrath to grace."

Another favored couplet was:

"On Christ, Almighty vengeance fell,
Which must have sunk a world to hell."

Dr. C. R. Brown writes:

The God who provides the means of reconciliation does not himself need to be reconciled or propitiated. The Scriptures show us the divine Father who was ready for reconciliation and his sinful children who were not ready. To change our attitude, not to change his own, "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself."[1]

7. *Again, the dark fact of retribution, whatever may be the depth of its misery or the length of its endurance, must be interpreted in the light of God's fatherly love.*

8. *Finally, heaven itself has been thought of as an existence of idleness according to a former idea of God as sitting aloof on a throne away from the activities of the world.* But when we understand that "The Father works even until now," we know that to the redeemed spirits a task will be given which "suits the full-grown energies of heaven."

We must thus test by the determining principle of God's Fatherhood all ideas of life's doctrines and life's duties.

"He is the fountain light of all our day,
The master light of all our seeing."

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[1] "Why I Believe in Religion." By C. R. Brown. The Macmillan Company.

CHAPTER XIII

THE EVIDENCE OF DIVINE FATHERHOOD

The basis of this faith rests both on the objective historical fact and on the subjective human experience. Both facts and ideas are necessary in sustaining our religious faith. These will be considered in order.

I

There is the historical foundation of the faith.

The Christian faith rests not on the mists that arise out of the fancy of the subjective mind. The myths and marvels that gather about the cradle of the non-Christian religions are without historical evidence. The apostles of the Christian faith base their faith on the foundation of facts.

St. Luke, the careful historian, writes:

> Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word; it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, that thou mightest know the certainty of those things wherein thou hast been instructed.

St. John writes:

> That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the word of life.

St. Peter testifies:

> We have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

The death and resurrection of the pagan gods were grotesque fancies in varied forms without any serious claim to truthfulness. The birth and death and resurrection of Jesus Christ are facts of history.

St. Paul, in 1 Corinthians 15: 1–8, records the evidence of the death and resurrection of Jesus which happened only twenty-five or twenty-six years before. The majority of the witnesses were living. There were more than five hundred to whom Jesus appeared.

St. Paul appeals to these witnesses. He also testifies that Jesus appeared to him also. The historical events on which the gospel is based were not hidden in a dim and remote past. St. Paul was converted two or three years after the crucifixion of Jesus. This testimony of St. Paul, a contemporary of Jesus, written within such a short period after the events, carries convincing evidence of historicity. Harnack, who has never manifested any orthodox bias, places the four Gospels in the first century.

When Tatian made the Diatessaron in the second century, the four Gospels were recognized as authentic records of Christ. The historicity of the crucifixion of Jesus under Pontius Pilate, and of belief in his resurrection among his intimate friends, has

never been shaken by the most searching and destructive criticism. The great ideas of the Christian faith are based on historical fact.

The divine Fatherhood is secure in the heart of humanity because Jesus in his incarnate life showed men the Father. There are those who imagine that belief in the love of God is not conditioned on any historical happening. But our faith in the love of God will persist because the Son of God lived with humanity and died for humanity. A belief in historical claims as a mere temporary scaffolding for the lifting up of certain religious ideas and ideals is not the Christianity of Jesus Christ. Christianity is not only a spiritual but a historical religion. Christian ideas are not to be separated from Christian history. It may be added that no strength of logical or historical evidence is satisfying in the absence of the evidence of spiritual experience. You cannot demonstrate the resurrection of Jesus to one who does not know the power of his resurrection. You cannot prove the immortal life to a man unless he already has heaven in his own life. But we must have the Christ of history to account for the Christ of experience, to support the Christian ideas, to account for the Christianity of history, to account for the history of the world, to explain the Christian Church, the Christian Sabbath, and the New Testament Scriptures.

That which was once a fact is always a fact. No historical fact can ever vanish with the lapse of

years. No kind of destructive criticism can ever weaken a historical fact.

II

This faith must rest on a conscious experience of the fatherly relation of God in Jesus Christ.

The disposition to regard the testimony of spiritual experience as something too vague and unsubstantial to be reliable is against both faith and reason. It is John Fiske, the scientist, who has so forcefully reminded us in effect that it would be a cruel mockery of a world where the physical senses testify correctly of the corresponding outside material objects, and the spiritual conscience and consciousness are delusive in their testimony of the world of spiritual realities.

This would mean that life breaks down at the top and is hollow at the heart.

> "Who forged that other influence,
> That heat of inward evidence
> By which he doubts against the sense?"

It is the Christian faith that God the Father, who is Spirit and a Person, speaks to the spirits of men. A God who would thunder in nature and have no still small voice for his human child is a kind of God for whom we have no concern.

A God who does not hear men speak to him, and who cannot speak to men, is a weak sort of God whom we would ignore.

Men would soon cease to speak to a God who would not or could not speak to them.

But saints through the ages, the wisest and the best, have persisted in the faith that they were in communion and fellowship with the Father.

"Whoso has felt the spirit of the highest
Cannot confuse nor doubt him nor deny;
Yea, with one voice, O world, though thou deniest,
Stand thou on that side, for on this am I."

Without this inner vital certainty of God, the historical facts of the faith seem far away and unsatisfying.

"Truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ."

"I know not how that Bethl'hem's Babe
Could in the Godhead be;
I only know the Manger Child
Has brought God's life to me.

I know not how that Calvary's cross
A world from sin could free;
I only know its matchless love
Has brought God's love to me.

I know not how that Joseph's tomb
Could solve death's mystery;
I only know a living Christ
Our immortality."

This experience is the result of experiment. The experiment of the eye reveals a world of light and beauty. The experiment of the ear reveals a world of sound and harmony.

The experiment with the radio when rightly adjusted brings to the mind out of the physical atmosphere voices from far and near.

When the soul is rightly adjusted, the whole spiritual atmosphere becomes audible to man's spirit with messages from God.

When through repentance and faith we make the supreme venture and cast ourselves upon God, there is always the answering response.

> "Nothing before, nothing behind;
> The steps of Faith
> Fall on the seeming void and find
> The rock beneath."

It is only as we venture, it is only as we make the experiment, that there can result the experience. There is a tree in Reigate, England, that is known as the "tree of decision." Under it stood Lady Henry Somerset and a dark tempest was raging in her mind which darkened all the horizon of her life. She was facing the alternative, Is there or is there not a God? A voice within her spirit said, "Live as though I were and you shall know that I am."

She made the decision, and forever after God was real.

God the Father does not become known to us through theories or intellectual speculations. There is the recognized variety of religious temperaments and some may proceed feelings foremost, and others mind foremost, and still others will foremost; but whatever may be the initial method, God can only

be known in the intimacy of experience and fellowship to those whose characters become harmonized with his own character.

"Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God."

If there is anything in our world that has reality, it is that which life testifies to at its highest and with its highest faculties and forces.

We can never believe that while the verdict of the lower senses is true, the soul of man at its deepest insight only gives us the baseless fabric of a dream. It is in accord with faith and reason as well, to sound forth the accent of apostolic certainty: "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day."

The joy of the Lord is our strength.

"What we have felt and seen
With confidence we tell,
And publish to the sons of men
The signs infallible."

PART FIVE

OBJECTIONS TO THE DIVINE FATHERHOOD

CHAPTER XIV

HUMAN ADJUSTMENT TO THE FACT OF SUFFERING

1. *There is the universal fact of sorrow.* I do not wish to wail in the minor key. But a philosophy of the world or an interpretation of life that will put us in the right attitude toward the universal fact of suffering is of the utmost importance. This fact confronts every individual at some time in his life. It belongs to every age of the world, and to every stage of human society, and to every order of living creatures. Just after Gypsy Smith had preached to a parlor full of millionaires' wives and daughters, a woman said to him: "Remember that no matter how small the audience there is always somebody in it who is broken-hearted."

2. *There is the necessity of ministry to the perplexed life.* It is at times needful to present that side of the gospel which is not a trumpet call to activity and Christian service, but which brings an inspiration to perseverance in the faith. There are people so perplexed by the problem of pain and disappointment that they have no heart for work.

It is mistakenly supposed that the only live questions are the questions that pertain to certain transient issues of the present. The problem of sorrow is of vital interest to every life. It is a ques-

tion as old as the book of Job and older, a question as new as the "In Memoriam" of Tennyson and newer, a question as fresh as the last throb of pain in your body, as the last throb of anguish in your heart.

3. *There is the beneficence of pain.* Scientists assure us that pain is an agency of mercy. You complain that you have a headache. You should say that a pain in your head kindly informs you that your system is not in good running order.

If it were not for pain, you would die before you found out anything was the matter with you.

The pain of conscience informs you that something is wrong in the moral nature that should be corrected.

4. *Holiness, not happiness, is the goal of life.* If the world exists solely for the comfort of man, it is a conspicuous failure. If it were intended simply for a paradise of bliss, then it is missing its purpose very widely. We shall only come to any sort of understanding of our world, and the purpose of it, when we know that God rules in our world to make creatures of character rather than creatures of comfort. Jesus teaches us that the supreme success of life is not to escape pain, but to lay hold of purity; not merely to receive gifts from God, but to be like God.

5. *Suffering increases as the order of life advances.* The oyster has small capacity for suffering. As nerves multiply, the capacity for suffering increases.

It is the ear trained to harmony that is most keenly sensitive to poor music.

It is the eye trained to the most perfect blending of colors that is most pained by an ugly blotch. Double your affectional nature and intellectual powers and you quadruple your capacity for suffering. Cut the nerves of sympathy and you eliminate a large amount of suffering. The saint knows agonies of soul that the low-minded never know. The perfect man was a man of sorrows and his crown was a crown of thorns. God himself is the supreme sufferer of the universe.

It may be added, however, that joy likewise increases. The capacity for joy is in proportion to the capacity of suffering. Bacon has said, "The nobler a soul is, the more objects of compassion it hath."

6. The all-important question with us is not whether we can understand the problem of sorrow, but whether we rightly relate ourselves to it.

The matter of importance is not whether we understand electricity, but whether we so relate ourselves to it as to receive the powers of light and locomotion.

The important thing is not whether we can understand the mystery of life, but whether we so relate ourselves to life as to make the best out of life. We do not understand one-billionth part of anything. There is a vast difference between seeing a fact and seeing into a fact.

As a general proposition the people who indulge

in bitter railing against suffering are those who fail to adjust themselves to their own suffering and who do little to relieve the suffering of others.

George Eliot, the brilliant English novelist, lost faith in God and Christ and immortality as she contemplated the suffering of the world. She speculated on the suffering of the world, but did nothing to relieve it.

General William Booth of the Salvation army placed his great heart under the burden of the suffering of the miserable and possessed a radiant faith in God.

Those who are free from the pessimism of disbelief are the unselfish spirits who share the sorrows of the suffering.

There is the false attitude in its various forms.

1. *There is the attempt at isolation from sorrow.* It was the law of the ancient Persian kings that no one should enter their presence clothed with sackcloth. All surroundings were to be joyful.

It is needless to say that such efforts were vain. Sorrow finds its way sometime, somewhere, into every home, into every heart. I trust no one will think that I am preaching a religion of gloom. I am simply endeavoring to be true to the facts of life. We are told that when Marie Antoinette passed to her bridal in Paris, the halt, the lame, and the blind were kept out of her sight, lest their appearance should mar the joyousness of her reception. But erelong the poor queen had a very close

view of misery's children, and she drank to the dregs the cup of life's bitterness.

I remember a physician in a certain town who became very much concerned about the salvation of his soul; but he refused to come out openly because it would cost him suffering, and he soon drifted away. In a letter sometime afterwards I was told that the son of that man had committed suicide, giving as the reason the cruelty of his father, and that the father, wild with grief, came near taking his own life.

There are people who have the delusion that Christianity is a religion of sorrow and that in escaping it they are escaping sorrow. But Christianity is not a religion of sorrow; it is a religion for sorrow.

2. *There is the denial of suffering.* A man may carry many delusions to the grave, but there come too many rude awakenings to allow him to remain steadfast in the belief in the illusion of pain. The folly of Christian Science must pass away, like many other religious fads, as against experience and reason and Scripture. A little girl is quoted as saying, "I am crying because I can't feel that I ain't hurt."

Falling over a chair several times on a dark night, striking the wrong nail with a hammer, or bumping your head suddenly against a harder object—that is, if you can find a harder object—all tend to bring us to sanity.

Christian Science tells all who are smitten with

any sort of trouble that their troubles spring out of "unpleasant thoughts." It says to the great army of physicians, You are fighting an illusion.

It would make no sanitary regulations, if consistent, because disease is imaginary.

It is a very comfortable doctrine, since it allows us to keep all our money for our real comforts and not spend it on the imaginary troubles of other people.

It makes a strong appeal to pride of mind, which imagines that it has a marvelous insight into the occult mysteries of life which is not given to the ignorant and uninitiated. In this respect it is a recrudescence of the old Gnosticism with its boasted superiority of knowledge.

The same theory is held by the Hindu devotee who grips the fingers of the hand until the nails come through on the other side, and stretches himself on a bed of spikes and declares that he feels no pain. But with all the absurdity of the theory there are people truly conscientious and morally pure who hold to it, and its appeal comes from a modicum of truth which the theory contains.

3. *There is the method of self-sufficiency.* This is after the manner of the old Stoics.

The self-sufficient man does not try to get away from suffering, nor does he try to deny it; he simply bears it and asks for no help, human or divine. He bears it without a sigh, without a prayer, without a tear. This is his language:

"Out of the night that covers me,
Black as the pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be
For my unconquerable soul.

It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll,
I am the master of my fate;
I am the captain of my soul."

This attitude often leads to insanity, as in the case of King Lear, who defied the very storms and elements, but whose faculties soon became as wild and disordered as the storm that raged about him.

4. *There is the method of cowardice.* This in its extreme form leads to suicide.

The more usual form, however, is to dull the keen edge of the sensibilities with drugs or to endeavor to drown the sorrows in the flowing bowl.

We can trace this cowardice through every order of society from the highest to the lowest.

The degraded negro of the slums under the spell of cocaine or his heavenly dust walks the Elysian fields. If carried to prison, the foul prison walls are the frescoed walls of a palace. His rags are the purple robes of royalty. But in a little while the dreams pass away, and all the troubles, increased and enlarged, are back again.

But here is a more respectable sort of man who has not sunk to such gross wretchedness. He has his troubles and takes to drink to help him bear them.

All the sad warnings that speak to him from the experience of others amount to nothing. He may turn himself into a beer keg, brutalize all the tenderer and finer feelings; but instead of removing a single sorrow, he sows the seed for a new harvest of troubles.

With already more troubles than he knows what to do with, he simply adds to the weight of his burden.

5. *There is the spirit of complaint and criticism.* The world is a colossal blunder. Nature was either made by a cruel God or by a God who created natural forces that have proved to be beyond his control. So there are people who constantly wail out their complaints. They whine and whimper a large part of their time. They complain loudly of the wrongs they receive from others. They carry on a secret quarrel with God.

Even some of the great saints have fallen temporarily into the mood of criticism.

Moses cries out, "Lord, wherefore hast thou dealt ill with this people?"

Job raises the protest, "Although thou knowest that I am not wicked, yet thou dost destroy me."

Jeremiah makes the complaint, "Why is my pain perpetual and my wound incurable, which refuseth to be healed?"

Habakkuk exclaims, "O Jehovah, how long shall I cry, and thou wilt not hear?"

6. *There is a passive surrender to grief.* Tennyson speaks of this kind of sorrow when he says,

> "Ring out the grief that saps the mind,
> For those that here we see no more."

There are those who shut themselves up with their griefs and nurse their sorrows.

There is a selfishness of suffering as selfish as the selfishness of sin. An excessive grief for the dead neglects the living.

A man in this constant state of self-pity is soon despised by others.

A morbid sympathy for self prevents people from girding themselves for the battle of life.

7. *There is the false resignation to suffering.* There is the type of religion which concerns itself only with salvation in the final sense.

It says that things may be all awry in this present world. You may suffer injustice. The good things of life may be most inequitably distributed. All this is due to the inscrutable providence of God. But never mind; above all, do not meddle with the problem. It will all come right in another world. If you cannot have a piano on earth, you can have a harp in heaven. Endure for a while with pious resignation. The discipline is good for your soul here, and you will get justice and your reward beyond. But this answer no longer satisfies. Justice can no longer be postponed to another world. The demand is for justice here and now.

The suffering from injustice and inhumanity must no longer be construed as the divine chastening for the discipline of the soul.

The promise of heaven is not to be used as an opiate to deaden the pain that ought not to be.

The gospel was never intended as a "dope" to quiet the pangs of pain, when the cause should be removed.

Salvation is not salvation merely into heaven. It is present. It is moral and ethical. It is to be interpreted in terms of justice, mercy, and love.

We have no kind of moral right to be resigned to the social wrongs and the oppression of the weak. It is our business to help remove the unnecessary suffering of life.

It is a false interpretation of life and blasphemy against God to say that it is his will. We are to wage a truceless warfare against injustice and inhumanity, which are the prolific source of so much of the woe of the world.

There will be enough inevitable suffering left to which we may wisely adjust ourselves.

Religion and revivals of religion were never intended for resignation results.

There are high-ups who are very much concerned that the low-downs get religion with the hope that the low-downs will be more contented with their lot.

The slogan familiar in Soviet Russia is, "Religion is the opiate of the people."

Under the old régime, the Church was a faithful ally of the cruel autocracy of the State. The priests were the partisans of the policies of the government, and even betrayed to the authorities political secrets which they learned at the confessional. The Church kept the people in ignorance. In addition to a very elementary education, the peasants were only supposed to know the Prayer Book and Psalm-singing. The admonition of the priests was to the effect that they should bear with submission the hard lot of earth, since an endless eternity of happiness awaited the faithful.

We have had no lack of condemnation of Bolshevism and little criticism of Russia where, before the revolution, State and Church combined to crush the common people. Yet the Russia of the red revolution was but the logical extreme which resulted from oppression and tyranny. The selfishness of the privileged creates or, at least, immensely increases the peril of the proletariat. According to the late Bishop C. D. Williams, the privileged group say: "Let the Church take care of the souls of men and we will take care of their bodies." But even with this proposed division of function they do not sufficiently care for the bodies of men.

> "Alas, that gold should be so dear
> And flesh and blood so cheap."

There are two contrasted criticisms of the Church. There is the criticism that religion is an

opiate, a charge too often justifiable. The other criticism directed against the Federal Council of Churches and the Social Creed of the Churches is that the Church does not stick to the gospel of a strict individualism.

Certain members of the capitalistic group exhort the preachers to preach the simple gospel. Periodicals like the *Wall Street Journal* and the *Manufacturers' Record* are very anxious that the incomparable bliss of heaven should be used as an offset against the crushing burdens of earth. They would direct the interests of people to the eternal future in order to protect the vested interests of the present.

> "The toad beneath the harrow knows
> Exactly where each sharp tooth goes;
> The butterfly upon the road
> Preaches contentment to the toad."

Whatever may be said of the necessity of rightly relating ourselves to the injustice and wrongs and inevitable sorrows of life, nothing can be said in defense of the sin of "Man's inhumanity to man which makes countless thousands mourn."

There is the true attitude of soul.

It is a trust in the love of God who transforms the disappointments of life into discipline of character.

Goethe says, "I never had an affliction which was not turned into a poem."

The finest graces of life are won out of conflict.

We learn joy in the fellowship of suffering with Jesus Christ.

We learn love by victory over the wrongs of those that hate us. We learn peace by clinging to Christ in the storm.

We learn faithfulness by loyalty to duty in the midst of loss and hardship.

We learn kindness by returning good for evil.

We learn temperance by victory over appetite and passion.

We learn meekness and patience amid the evils of life.

We learn liberality by crucifying selfishness.

In "The Toilers of the Sea," Victor Hugo gives a long account of Gilliat's rescue of the wrecked vessel, the Durande.

He seemed to be pitted against a world of contrary forces. It seemed a hopeless matter for one unaided man to rescue the valuable machinery from complete wreck. But Gilliat, by a series of skillful contrivances and by his daring and genius, made the titanic forces of nature his servants.

The wild waves, the fierce hurricane, the rocks between which the vessel was sunk, the power of gravity, and the tides were all yoked together in such a way as to raise and rescue the sunken vessel.

It is so in human life. We may become masters of the fierce elements that rage about us, until the life is constantly lifted by the forces that would destroy.

It is not a visionary fancy, but a sober fact, that "All things work together for good to those who love God."

All the events and circumstances of life may be turned into goodness. Man is to preserve that spiritual attitude of trust in which all the experiences of life shall work for his good.

It is a profound truth that should bring to the faithful soul ceaseless comfort and an unruffled peace that through grace he is master of all the forces of earth and heaven, and that every storm that beats against him shall only raise him to a higher height. "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared to the glory which shall be revealed in us."

There is no weight of world calamities that can crush the faithful spirit.

There are no foes but may be made to fight for us.

With a right attitude of soul we may always be more than conquerors.

All the things that happen to us may be transmitted into moral and spiritual good.

We can trust His love until all things shall be made clear. "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." "And now men see not the bright light that is in the clouds, but the wind passeth by and cleanseth them."

No little child has ever come from God and stayed awhile in some home without making glad the home and leaving a trace of heaven behind. We can

never welcome this sorrow of death, and it is hard to forgive his robberies, but he leaves behind many peaceable fruits of righteousness and takes away shallow and trifling views of life.

Jean Ingelow has given us the truth in poetic form:

"Sorrows humanize our race;
Tears are the showers that fertilize this world,
And memory of things precious keepeth warm
The heart that once did hold them.

They are poor
That have lost nothing; they are poorer far
Who, losing, have forgotten; they most poor
Of all, who lose and wish they might forget."

More agonizing than this kind of sorrow is the living sorrow in blighted homes where sons and daughters have been a bitter disappointment and a heart-breaking tragedy, and parents with saddened wail over some Absalom say, "Would God I had died for thee" or "Would God he had died in his childhood." But even this gives an insight into the heart of the Eternal Father, whose children we all are and whose heart we have grieved. The best and holiest examples of piety are such as have been tried and purified in the crucible of sorrow.

The discipline of sorrow is seen in the fact that only sufferers have made any lasting contribution to our world.

There is not a single great truth that blesses human life to-day but was given to the world by a great sufferer.

Job but for his suffering would never have expressed the immortal hope, nor reached the calm assurance, "I know that my Redeemer liveth."

The sublime heights of St. Paul were reached in his prison epistles, and St. John entered into the vision of the eternal city from his exile in Patmos.

Take from the Bible the books that were written in prison, in captivity, and in anguish of spirit, and you would remove the very heart of the Revelation. Take from the world's literature the contribution of those whose minds have been chastened by sorrow and nothing would be left worth reading.

Take from the hymnals the contributions of those who have given us in song what they have learned in sorrow and nothing would be left worth singing.

Fanny Crosby became blind at six weeks of age. She once said: "I am the happiest soul living. If I had not been deprived of my sight, I would never have received so good an education, nor have cultivated so fine a memory, nor have been able to do good to so many people."

Take out of the world the priceless legacies left by sweet, suffering spirits and the world would be too poor to live in.

"They are the world's great Altar Stairs,
That slope through darkness up to God."

"They climbed the steep ascent of heaven
Through peril, toil, and pain:
O God, to us may grace be given
To follow in their train."

George Matheson, the blind Scotch preacher, was told by his physician that sight would soon be gone. He went to the one whom he loved most and she rejected his love. Alone in darkness and desolation of spirit he wrote the lines,

"O Love that wilt not let me go,
I rest my weary soul in thee;
I give thee back the life I owe,
That in thine ocean depths its flow
May richer, fuller be."

CHAPTER XV

THE INSIGHT OF AN ANCIENT SAINT

The book of Job contains forty-two chapters, which it will profit us to read, not in a desultory fashion, but continuously as you read an interesting novel. Carlyle pronounces it the sublimest book ever written. Its author is unknown, its date is unknown, but possibly no other Old Testament book has entered so deeply into human thought. The old orthodox position was that prosperity is always a proof of righteousness and God's favor, and adversity is always a sign of wickedness and God's wrath. If a man suffers, it is because he has sinned; and if he is a great sufferer, he is a great sinner. According to the old theory, Jehovah was the author of all natural evil. There were no secondary causes. All things both good and evil proceeded from the same divine source. It was held that the ministry of natural evil, such as accident or disease, was directed specifically against moral evil. What men suffer was the divinely appointed penalty of moral evil, punishment for the wrong they had done. Around this idea the whole discussion of the book of Job moves.

I

The purpose which the book of Job serves is evident.

1. Its main aim is to refute the dominant theory that all suffering proceeds from sin.

2. The book teaches:

(1) That suffering may be a trial of righteousness, and that as such it may strengthen faith, and is therefore disciplinary.

(2) That piety is not perfected in the field of prosperity.

(3) That real piety is unshaken by adversity and unspoiled by prosperity.

(4) That a correct idea of suffering widens man's view of the providence of God and vindicates his justice. It is the world problem of human suffering and divine justice.

That the old theory was very persistent, we see in the incidents of Christ's life, when questions were asked about those whose blood Pilate mingled with their sacrifices, and those on whom the tower of Siloam fell, and the man born blind; but in each case Jesus answered that it was not the retribution of God. Of course the example of Christ himself is a complete reply to the old error. He was the one person who could throw out the challenge, "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" Yet he was born and reared in poverty. He lived a wandering life without a home. He was distrusted by his own family, forsaken by his friends, betrayed by a disciple, persecuted by his enemies with the utmost cruelty, and after a public life of three short years died in the company of thieves with the most ex-

cruciating agonies of crucifixion. The career of Jesus, the one perfectly righteous man who has lived in our world, does not agree with the statement of Elihu in the book of Job, "If they obey and serve him, they shall spend their days in prosperity and their years in pleasures."

This is why the cross was a stumblingblock to the Jews, since if God allowed anyone to die such a disgraceful death it must be because he was a great sinner. This was why the Jews rejected Jesus as Messiah, since they were convinced that no man could suffer as Jesus did and still be in the favor of God. This is the explanation of the grief of St. Paul over his thorn in the flesh, since a bodily affliction was not only an offense against the æsthetic sense of his hearers, but also a sure mark of moral obliquity.

Virtue is always rewarded and wickedness always punished, but God does not pay men off in the current coin of this world. God does not purchase the obedience of men with a bribe of gold. It is a very popular notion in the Church and sometimes in the pulpit that a man will more than get back the money he gives to the Church and the kingdom of God. If a man's liberality stands on that mercenary foundation, I do not object to destroying the foundation.

The only worthy motive is to give because generosity is better than greed, and goodness is better than gold. If you give five dollars, a hundred dol-

lars, or a thousand dollars to the Church, you will in all probability live just that much poorer and die just that much poorer. Human life is such a curiously complex affair that it is necessary to modify the statement. It is true that an ungenerous man frequently disgusts, and thereby suffers even financial loss. It is true, on the other hand, that a righteous man possesses certain qualities, such as freedom from expensive vices, which lead to temporal prosperity. But in the main the old idea breaks down. Jay Gould has not been canonized. Carnegie is not enrolled among the saints. The millionaire Girard established a college from which religion was barred. St. Paul suffered the loss of all things for the cause of his Lord and did not get a dollar back, but died poor. A great many of our cheap storybooks are full of this kind of false morality. The hero always comes out with flying colors. The villain is always overtaken by dire calamity. The spelling books and readers that some of us used to study are full of this kind of sugar-plum religion. Johnny was a good boy and he got a plum cake, and Tommy was a bad boy and he got the stick. Johnny Goodchild grew up to be the richest man in town and Tommy Scapegrace grew up to be the poorest man in town. But how often the reverse is true, and it is Tommy Scapegrace who comes into wealth and prominence, becomes Mayor of his town, and if he gets bad enough may break into the legislature. This false theory is fairly met

in the book of Job. There are in contrast the unusual righteousness of Job's character and the unusual severity of his sufferings.

II

There is the career of Job.

1. The character of Job is beyond reproach.

(1) God's testimony is given: "And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?"

(2) The testimony of Job's wife is to be received: "Dost thou still retain thine integrity?" This is good testimony. Your wife knows exactly whether you are righteous or not. It may be that she would not give an honest expression concerning it for the world.

(3) Job's own testimony is of value since it is so well corroborated. "Though he slay me, yet will I trust him: but I will maintain mine own ways before him." "My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go." He knows the sure tests of religious character and tries himself by them.

(*a*) He claims inward purity: "I made a covenant with mine eyes."

(*b*) He was considerate of employees: "I had regard for the cause of my manservant and maidservant."

(*c*) He helps the unfortunate: "I was eyes to the blind and feet to the lame."

(*d*) He was free from the love of gold: "I have not made gold my hope."

(*e*) He had no joy in the destruction of his enemies: "I rejoiced not at the destruction of him that hated me." Let us measure ourselves by his character. Did you ever rejoice at the calamity of an enemy?

2. The suffering of Job is of the utmost severity.

(1) There was loss of property. It is no light matter to have the work and savings of a lifetime swept away in a moment. It has led to many suicides.

(2) There was personal bereavement. There is the awful loneliness of life when those who made life glad speak to us no more in this world.

(3) He suffered bodily affliction. "My skin is black upon me, and my bones are burned with heat." There is the terrible affliction of black leprosy. The mind and body are close neighbors and are vitally affected by each other. Only a slight physical ailment is sufficient to make some people miserable, and anybody else miserable who has anything to do with them.

(4) There was the evil counsel of his wife: "Curse God and die." It was a drop of gall in the cup of his suffering that Mrs. Job should have failed in the hour of all hours when she ought to have remained true.

(5) There was the miserable comfort of his friends. We can get rid of our enemies; they do not have much to do with us. But who will deliver us from our friends? These comforting friends come to him in his sorest troubles, when of all times he needs comfort, and argue with him that his sorrow is the penalty he is paying for some sin against God. The sorrow is enough to bear, but added to it is the argument of his comforters that he is under the wrath of God.

(6) There was the bitterness of human desertion: "All my inward friends abhorred me." Next to the tragedy of being forsaken of God is to be forsaken by our friends.

(7) There was a memory of good things in the past: "O that I were as in months past." "Sorrow's crown of sorrow is remembering happier things."

(8) He faced the prospect of immediate death. Before there came to him the light of the immortal hope, he felt that he must go down to his grave, smitten by the apparent injustice of God.

(9) There was the seeming omnipotence of evil. To feel that the earth is given over into the hands of the wicked has brought unspeakable anguish to the hearts of many of God's purest saints.

(10) More than all these was the failure to understand God. This is the very heart of Job's trouble. All other calamities would be bearable but for this. There seems to be a conflict within the personality

of God himself. He appeals from the God of tradition to the God of reality. He appeals from God as he seems to be to God as he really is. He appeals from God who is merciless to God who is merciful.

The final solution of suffering is beyond the finite mind.

There is an unsolved element of mystery that remains. There belongs to the finite faculties no final solution of human sorrow.

There break in upon us every day "perpetual moanings from the troubled sea of human life."

There is the world's Gethsemane with its bloody sweat of human anguish.

There is the world mystery of the inequality of human comfort and sorrow.

There is the apparent injustice in the distribution of earthly good and rewards.

> "It is a world of mystery
> From every meanest blade that cuts the sod
> To the great star-domed temple of our God,
> Pulsing with restless, unknown power."

The mystery of it was upon the Son of God himself when he said, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" But still he said, "My God." At last it is not the mind but the heart that gives us rest from the perplexities of life.

Job, the old-time sufferer, was led away from the presence of men, with their poor arguments for the ways of God that are past finding out, into the presence of the majesty and greatness of God in the

storm. "I had heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee."

Into the midst of the vain discussions of men, into the midst of bodily suffering and anguish of mind, sounds the voice of the Almighty. God does not attempt to justify his ways or to explain the problems of life. He does not seek to answer the doubts of Job, but simply reveals himself as near.

An element of mystery remains in the mind; but if the heart, the love and longing, and the highest intuitions find their object, their resting place in the one sought, then life is at peace.

The Bible does not explain the mysteries of life, but its high value is that it brings God into the life. We are to use the mind to acquire knowledge and to make investigation, but after all it is only the presence and companionship of God that satisfies.

Jesus himself did not answer curious questions about life. He did not explain many things that men seek in vain to know, but he assured us of the love and presence of God, and called us to him that we might put our trust in him.

The end of life is the personal relation with God through Christ.

Other things may wait, until that glad day when the mists of earth have lifted, and we see the light within the clouds, and we shall know even as we are known. But even now we may know him, and have fellowship with him, and rest our tired minds and aching hearts upon his love.

CHAPTER XVI

THE CAUSAL FACTORS IN SUFFERING

A STRUGGLE which has been intensified in our modern world is that of maintaining faith in a God who is good. And if compelled to make a choice between a cruel God and no God, I would not hesitate to accept the latter alternative, dark and hopeless as it is.

With Milton there is the persistent effort to "justify the ways of God to men."

We no longer believe that might is right in God, any more than in men.

We no longer make excuses for God and try to explain away acts attributed to him which we would not attempt to defend in man. We are no longer God's partisans. The modern scientific mind makes its appeal to the facts as they are. We want to know the worst. We do not care to live in a fool's paradise. We want to know the best. We do not want the fatherly God hidden from us under the cloak of a superficial science or a false theology.

There are some distinct theories of the cause of suffering.

I

The theory of the cause of suffering affords no particular problem to atheism. Suffering simply

results from the clash of blind and contending forces with no directing mind or purpose.

II

The religion of India found the cause of suffering in the doctrine of karma. There is the reincarnation of the human, and man suffers for sins committed in a previous state of existence. All sin after this manner receives its full measure of suffering. Dr. B. H. Streeter in his recent volume "Reality" makes the following criticism of the imperfect solution of this theory:

> The moralist may reasonably urge that punishment fails to attain its object unless the offender is conscious that and exactly for what he is being punished, at the time when the punishment is being inflicted. Again philanthropists may urge that the theory that all suffering is richly deserved is likely to damp man's ardor in the effort to relieve it.[1]

While Brahmanism and Buddhism hold in common the doctrine of karma, yet Buddhism places more stress on desire as the cause of suffering. All desire for the continuance of the personality must be extinguished.

According to Buddha, the goal of salvation is the cessation of being, the attainment of Nirvana. With Buddha the problem of life was the extinction of all desire, since desire was the fountain source of suffering.

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[1] "Reality." By B. H. Streeter. The Macmillan Company.

III

The religion of Israel traced all suffering to the sin of man and endeavored to maintain a perfect balance between sin and suffering in the earthly life of each individual. A desperate effort was made to defend this theory against the facts of life.

IV

There is finally the Christian explanation of the cause of suffering. It is scarcely necessary to add that I am speaking of an enlightened Christian interpretation which is in harmony with scientific knowledge.

There are four factors which make for all our happiness or all our misery:

1. There is the reign of physical law, the existence of a world of order, the uniformity or the neutrality of nature.

Dr. B. H. Streeter in "Reality" writes:

> The uniformity of nature is not an iron cage against which we dash ourselves in longing to escape; it is a necessary condition of such freedom as we have. Theoretically, the problem how I am to reconcile the reign of law with freedom may be insoluble. Practically, unless I knew that I could reckon on things happening in accordance with some fixed and ascertainable principle, I might wish, but I never could act or plan. If fire sometimes heated, sometimes froze the kettle, who could invite a friend to tea? If the laws of specific gravity changed from day to day, who would venture in balloon or ship? It is not otherwise in the moral sphere. Conduct could have no moral quality, good or evil, but for the law of the inevitability of consequence. . . . The ancients condemned as inartistic a plot in which the play-

wright brings in a "god in a machine" to rescue the characters from some inextricable mess into which the natural development of events have led them. A God who regularly did this sort of thing in real life would make morality impossible.[2]

2. The second factor which results in suffering is the expanding universe.

There are the violent forces and convulsions of nature.

There is the suffering inflicted by earthquakes and storms.

Suffering and death result not only from the violation of nature, but from the violence of nature.

It is not a result of ignorance of or disobedience to the laws of nature. The utmost possible knowledge of the laws of nature and obedience to the laws of nature afford no immunity from calamity.

The sins of men do not account for the lightning stroke or the volcanic eruption.

There is no other form of suffering which places so heavy a burden of perplexity on the human mind.

No final and satisfactory solution may be given. But we can understand something of the contribution of natural calamities to human progress.

Aside from storms on land we would have been spared much heartbreaking havoc, but we would also have been without the development of architecture that builds against the storm.

Aside from storms on sea we would have been

[2] "Reality." By B. H. Streeter. The Macmillan Company.

spared the disasters of the deep, but we would also have been without the marvelous engineering which has made of the dividing seas a highway that has bound the nations together.

Aside from the destructive forces of drought and flood we would have missed the affliction of famine, but we would have likewise missed the development in a more scientific agriculture.

In the absence of these different forms of calamity, the world would have been saved much sorrow, but the world would likewise have been deprived of the exercise of mercy and human helpfulness.

Earthquakes and volcanoes are the safety valves of the globe. The physical earth advances toward perfection through suffering. "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth together in pain until now."

All progress is at the cost of pain. Is not the progress of humanity that has only been possible through these natural calamities worth the price, even though the price is reddened with blood?

3. The third factor in suffering is the free will of man. The perversion of freedom results in sin and suffering, but without the possibility of sin and suffering there could not have existed the possibility of goodness or happiness. What sort of a world would we have without the power of free choice? Would it be a better world in which men were machines? Even God could not achieve greatly without taking a risk. Since this idea has already been

discussed in another connection, it is not necessary to make further elaboration.

4. The fourth and final factor in the explanation of the cause of suffering is social solidarity or the interrelationship of humanity.

This interrelationship makes possible our greatest happiness or deepest woe. It is the source of much suffering. As discussed elsewhere, the only alternative is strict isolation and separation of each individual from every other individual. We cannot imagine that sort of a world.

"We are members one of another." There could not be the possibility of bringing good to another life, if there were not also the possibility of bringing evil. According to the Christian view, there is a beneficent purpose in suffering, and amid all the growing pains of our growing world God places ever before humanity the goal of goodness.

CHAPTER XVII

CRUELTY IN NATURE

THE different forms of suffering may be summed up under five different phases: Suffering as the Result of the Destructive Forces of Nature; Retributive Suffering; Suffering as a Result of Solidarity of Life; Vicarious Suffering; Disciplinary Suffering.

I

The modern problem of God and nature has received no final solution. The question in its modern aspect is not any conflict between the attributes of God, but the apparent conflict between God and nature. The cruelty of nature is a persistent problem that has yet received no final solution. With this problem the Christian faith has struggled for its very existence. One-third of the people who fill our insane asylums are insane by heredity. Many of them have lucid intervals, which they spend in blaspheming God, and what reply can we make to them?

Very many conclude that there is nothing behind all visible phenomena but a cold, heartless power; that the world is a slaughterhouse filled with the groans of the dying; that the earth is a battle field reddened with the blood of her children; that nature

is a vast murderous machine that grinds to death its victims with infinite power and infinite cruelty. One of our great scientists saw in all the processes and activities of nature only a selfish struggle for life and the survival of the fittest. Over against this impeachment of nature another scientist tells us that the fundamental fact is the struggle for the life of others, which ennobles suffering by giving it a moral and vicarious value. His position is that nature can only be interpreted by acknowledging this vicarious principle of sacrifice. Another writer of note, while attempting no final solution, fairly meets the issue and divides all physical evils into three kinds:

1. There is man in the hands of the destructive forces of nature, as the cyclone, the earthquake, the lightning, and the pestilence.

2. There are evils which are inevitable to man, especially death.

3. There are evils man suffers from man, the evil inheritance of heredity among others.

In the case of the first, the destructive forces of nature are man's most beneficent educators. Through these man has progressed in the arts and sciences and in the emotions of sympathy. These destructive forces have led man to make progress in the construction of his buildings and in the cultivation of his soil. This is the explanation of the vast progress in medical knowledge. By these the element of pity in the human heart has been

strengthened a hundredfold. In the absence of these destructive forces man would never have advanced from savagery to civilization.

As to the second, death is man's best friend, and by means of it life becomes serious and great and time valuable. But for the sobering and chastening influence of death, life would be barren and selfish. It was death from scarlet fever of a favorite grandchild that led J. D. Rockefeller to devote a large amount of money to the investigation of diseases and their cure. It was the death of Leland Stanford, Jr., that led to one of the largest educational bequests ever made in the United States. It was the death of the little daughter of Charles Crittenton that caused him to establish the Florence Crittenton Rescue Homes, and to become a leader in the rescue of many wandering daughters of his people.

As to the third, heredity, when not distorted from its primary purpose, is most beneficent, cumulative of good, and the stores of health, sanity, and virtue are transmitted from generation to generation. In brief, there is the moral use of dark things.

The only other plan on which God could have constructed the world would have been to make room for a constant intervention, by which man would have been preserved from all accidents, to provide for man a fool-proof universe, so that at certain times fire would not burn him, gravitation would not break his bones, and disease would not kill him; but a fool-proof universe would contain

only fools. We might imagine a world peopled by the creation of separate individuals, no solidarity of human life, isolated individuals bound together by no ties of kinship or influence. But it would be a cold, cheerless affair, and without the possibility of the communication of good.

There had to come an enlarged conception of the meaning of suffering or the shipwreck of faith; it cannot be altogether retributive. It must not be heartless. Tennyson gives us a most vivid expression of this apparent conflict between God and nature:

> "Are God and Nature then at strife,
> That Nature lends such evil dreams?
> So careful of the type she seems,
> So careless of the single life.
>
> So careful of the type, but no.
> From scarped cliff and quarried stone
> She cries, 'A thousand types are gone:
> I care for nothing; all shall go.'"

No discussion, however elaborate, can remove the mystery of the world as touching the cruel, pitiless forces in nature. It is our sole purpose to indicate some approaches to a solution.

II

There is the picture of the fiercer forces of nature. G. A. Studdert-Kennedy writes:

> Beside the dove that coos in the dovecote on a summer day, we have to put the man-eating tiger, tearing its victim limb from

limb; beside the nightingale singing its love song to the stars, we have to put the snake that strikes to kill. It is not so simple after all. Look all the facts in the face, and your soul cries out in doubt, "What is God like?"[1]

William Blake puts in memorable verse this darker phase of nature:

"Tiger, tiger, burning bright,
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

When the stars threw down their spears,
And watered heaven with their tears,
Did He smile his work to see?
Did he who made the lamb make thee?"

Tennyson, in "Maud," is grappling with the same dark problem:

"For nature is one with rapine, a harm no preacher can heal;
The Mayfly is torn by the swallow, the sparrow speared by the shrike,
And the whole little wood where I sit is a world of plunder and prey."

We should fairly face the perpetual problem of the cruel aspects of nature.

In the larger part of animal creation there is ceaseless warfare in which the strong devour the weak.

In the water the marine animals feed upon one another. They are equipped for battle with their poisonous stings and sharp lances.

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[1] "Lies." By G. A. Studdert-Kennedy. Doubleday, Doran & Company, Inc.

J. S. Mill is fierce in his arraignment of the cruelty of nature. He writes: "Killing, the most criminal act recognized by human law, nature does once to every being that lives; and in a larger proportion of cases, after protracted torture such as only the monsters whom we read of ever purposely inflicted on their living fellow creatures."

Huxley describes nature as "a vast gladiatorial show," "a dismal cockpit."

Are we able to harmonize this stern side of nature with a religious and spiritual interpretation of the world?

It is doubtless true that the suffering of the lower animal order is exaggerated. We are prone to make a wholesale kind of estimate when the fact is that there is no such thing as a sum total of wretchedness. Even in the realm of the human there is no more suffering than the utmost suffering that any one person endures.

But even with this explanation we can find no easy solution for the suffering that is in the world.

The traditional interpretation was to relieve God of all responsibility and attribute all suffering, even in the animal world, to man. But we now know that for millions of years before man lived the earth consisted of "the dragons of the prime that tore each other in their slime." The lower creatures were in ceaseless struggle with teeth and talons, and there was the reign of terror and torture.

Man was not responsible for that. Romanes

raised the question: "For cold that freezes God's living creatures, for lightning that kills them, for volcanoes that burn them, for typhoons that crush them—is man responsible?"

Is it possible to harmonize the power that destroys through forces of nature and arms the animals for the carnage of conflict with the tender and infinite love of a Heavenly Father?

A fresh outbreak of infidelity follows in the wake of great calamities, whether in the form of earthquakes, cyclones, or a destructive war, or the wide scourge of a pestilence.

The dilemma is set forth that either God is limited in power or limited in goodness. We are reminded of the universal sway of physical pain and mental anguish, of the suffering not only of the guilty, but in many instances the keener suffering of the innocent, the suffering as a result of evil heredity, and the suffering which results from our social solidarity.

III

While the entire problem presented is not an easy one, yet there are some considerations which relieve the tenseness of the problem.

There is the picture of the gentler agencies of life.

The critics of nature are obsessed by a one-sided view and interpretation of nature. They think black and see red.

The tornado causes them to forget the nourishing rain. The destructive earthquake obliterates all gratitude for the abundant food supplies of mother earth.

P. Kropotkin, a Russian writer, has written a book, "Mutual Aid," which demonstrates the extent to which Huxley overdrew the conflicts of nature, when he compared it to a "dismal cockpit." Kropotkin describes the coöperative and sympathetic side of animal life. He tells of the blind pelican which was cared for and fed by other pelicans; fed with fishes which had to be brought for a distance of thirty miles. A naturalist in Peru saw a herd of vicunas in hot retreat with the stronger males of the herd staying behind to protect the weaker.

This author cites the illustration from Darwin of how, among the Hottentots, when a man gets anything, he at once divides it among all present. This is not only Hottentot manners, but it is all but a universal custom among the savages the world over.

Among the civilized nations united aid is more and more supplanting conflict and competition as the law of life. The law of love as revealed and exemplified by Jesus Christ is the goal toward which our world is surely and gradually moving.

Victory is at last with the gentler forces of the world. "The meek shall inherit the earth." The lurid scientists who see only in nature the dominance

of tornadoes and earthquakes, and who see only tigers and wolves and hyenas and snakes, fail to reckon with the fact that the gentler creatures are winning out. The lambs far outnumber the tigers and wolves. The lions are seen for the most part as curiosities in circus shows. The sparrows are speared by the shrikes; yet the sparrows are abundant, while we have to consult a dictionary to find out what a shrike means.

Boreham, the essayist, writes: "The contest between the gazelle and hyena seems a most unequal one; yet the fact is that while the gazelle is constantly multiplying, zoölogists are seriously concerned about the future of the hyena."[2]

We are to appraise nature by her manifest purpose and promised consummation rather than by her crude beginnings.

Goethe says: "Nature creates man dependent upon the earth, dull and heavy, and yet is always shaking him until he attempts to soar above it."

We must judge the processes of nature by its highest product, by its promised consummation, by the spiritual goal.

We must look for the meaning of men, not in the crude primitive forces of human life, but in Jesus Christ the perfect man.

G. A. Studdert-Kennedy writes:

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[2] "Wisps of Wildfire." By F. W. Boreham. Copyright 1924. Used by permission of the Abingdon Press.

It is no mere metaphor, but the nearest expression of final truth to which I can attain and express, when I say that I see all nature signed with the sign of the Cross, and bright with the glory of Easter day. I see the whole creation groaning and travailing in pain together until now, and the meaning of the travail I can find in Christ. I can only understand nature by looking back at it through Christ. I can only understand God's labor and God's suffering in nature as I look at it through his labor and suffering in Christ. The God of nature is the God of Calvary, the God revealed in Christ.[3]

A vast amount of suffering springs from evil heredity, but the only alternative would have been a strict individuality of life in which each human being would be a distinct and separate creation. This would deprive us of the advantage of good heredity and all the love and tender ties of kinship and family relationship.

There is the large sum of misery which springs from our social solidarity and contacts. But when we try to imagine a complete isolation and separation, we see the loss that would come from being deprived of all the helpful influences which enable some lives to exercise an ennobling ministry on other lives. Again, if humanity were protected from disease that follows a violation of the laws of nature, the human race would remain in infantile ignorance and weakness and the marvelous conquest of medical science over disease would have been a heroic chapter omitted from the annals of human progress.

[3] "Lies." By G. A. Studdert-Kennedy. Doubleday, Doran & Company, Inc.

A consideration which throws light on the problem of human suffering is seen in the fact that human character only progresses toward the goal of perfection, through severe trials and bitter disappointments. If character rather than comfort is the *summum bonum* of human life, we are to be reconciled to the discipline which brings us through great tribulation.

"Then welcome each rebuff
That turns earth's smoothness rough,
Each sting that bids nor sit nor stand but go,
Be our joys three-parts pain!
Strive and hold cheap the strain,
Learn nor account the pang; dare, never grudge the throe."

Again a world of law is better than a world of caprice. Pope pertinently asks, "Shall gravitation cease when you go by?"

A world of law of necessity involves suffering. A world of progress is better than a world of stagnation.

Whatever mysterious questions may remain as to the universality and continuity of pain, we do know that there has been uniform and steady progress toward higher and more perfect forms of life.

An increase of happiness is better than a low order of pleasurable sensation. The joy of life has been increased by suffering. The poet sings: "Chords that vibrate sweetest pleasure thrill the deepest notes of woe."

We are told that the Perfect Man, "for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame."

A world that is constituted for building and perfecting character is better than a world of ease and ignorance. Character cannot be achieved except through pain and struggle and resistance and opposition. To him that overcometh is given the crown of life. Struggle and adversity and antagonism are necessary to produce patience and courage and sympathy.

With a true insight into the divine purpose we shall appreciate the sublimity of the words of Joyce Kilmer, the war poet:

> "Thank God for the stress and pain of life,
> And O, thank God for God."

CHAPTER XVIII

SUFFERING RETRIBUTIVE, SUFFERING FROM THE SOLIDARITY OF LIFE, AND VICARIOUS SUFFERING

I

THERE is the suffering which results from retribution. It was the mistake of the comforters of Job that they traced all suffering to retribution for sin. It has been the mistake of theology that it has represented all the suffering of the world as following after sin; whereas the fact is that prior to the appearance of man on earth there is a long, dark record of conflict and pain and anguish. But despite this consideration, much of the suffering of the earth is a direct result of sin.

Who can measure the vast ocean of misery caused by intemperance in drink, that submerges the innocent as well as the guilty?

Who can measure that vaster ocean of misery which comes from gluttony, whose troubled surface floats such a dark variety of human ailments?

Who is able to fathom that almost bottomless sea of human anguish that results from the stress and strain of modern life in which the faculties are goaded on beyond their natural face, both in work and pleasure, terminating in nervous breakdown and insanity?

There is also the suffering which falls upon both guilty and innocent as a result of impurity, which is beyond the power of human language to depict.

There is the indescribable anguish that flows out of the wickedness of war.

In any reasonable attempt at some understanding of the problem of suffering, we must reckon with the large amount of suffering which men bring on themselves through sin.

All sin must find its outlet through suffering, both of the guilty and the innocent.

Human beings come into life with the stain of somebody else's sin written on the tablet of their bodies.

Think of the innocent lives blighted and blasted by the sins of others. Every sin of your life means that you must suffer. Every violation of law means that your life suffers the injury of so much destroyed capacity for what you might have been.

One may be so hardened in insensibility as to be little disturbed by the pangs of conscience, but Jesus Christ lifts the curtain which separates us from the future life and tells us that sin must receive its just deserts in suffering.

There is the suffering which follows in the wake of ignorance and carelessness.

There would be no progress possible if God made miraculous interventions to prevent the penalty.

Fire burns the innocent babe just the same as the guilty criminal.

A violation of the law of gravity will break the bones of the hero just as it will break the bones of the villain.

II

There is suffering which results from the solidarity of life. This is closely connected with vicarious suffering. As a result of the interrelationship there is the suffering of innocence, so that men say, "The way of the Lord is not equal."

Jesus used a little child to stimulate faith, but how often the haggard face of a neglected and wronged child deadens faith.

This was the proposed program of Mill, if according to his idea God were just: "Each person's share of suffering and happiness would be exactly proportioned to that person's good or evil deeds, and no human being would have a worse lot than others without worse deserts." This would make a hard, dry, dismal world.

If my lot in life were exactly proportioned to my individual deeds, it would leave me physically, intellectually, and morally in absolute starvation. It is the contribution of others which has made my life a life at all. If we should not have a worse lot than others without worse deserts, then we should not have a better lot without better deserts. According to this we would still be prehistoric savages. Man cannot have the benefit of good heredity without the possibility of evil heredity. Man is not an isolated unit. "We are members one of another."

Our life is organic. Strict individualism would not be justice; it would be an end of life in any human sense of the word. This would involve not only a separation of each human life from all others; it would necessarily mean a separate and distinct creation of each human life.

Then the question goes back to the kind of man that God has created. To be a man at all includes the freedom of man. If God had made him a machine, then men could not have inflicted injustice on anybody else. But what kind of a world would this have been? There are those who criticize the world, with an expression of regret that they were not called into consultation, since they could have offered valuable suggestions touching the method of God in the world.

Why should it be possible that the sin of one villain should cause such widespread suffering to so many interconnected lives?

You can only imagine the other alternative, and you cannot really imagine that, in which human lives are marked by separateness and isolation. And in a world where there would be no possibility of man's sin enhancing the misery of the world, there would likewise be no possibility of man's goodness enhancing the happiness of the world. A world in which each person would be a Robinson Crusoe without even his man Friday is not a world that makes an attractive appeal.

Since the sin of man brings to him wretchedness

and, on account of social contacts, inflicts suffering upon the innocent, then why does God allow man to sin?

We find this familiar dilemma: either he could have prevented it but would not, or he would have prevented it but could not.

If we accept the first, we must conclude that God is a being of imperfect goodness; if we accept the second, the conclusion must be that he is a being of limited power.

I see nothing whatever derogatory to the nature of God in freely admitting a limitation of his power, call it if you will a self-limitation. God cannot do the impossible and the contradictory. Then why does God allow men to sin? Because God could not help it. God could not give to man freedom of will, the innate power of choosing between two ways, and at the same time prevent man's choice of evil. Since this is true, then why did God give to man that freedom with its perilous possibilities?

There could have been no other way of making a man. There is no possibility of sainthood without the possibility of sin. We can conceive of God making a machine in human form, but such a creation would not have been man.

Both happiness and character would have been impossible. The world is so bound together that it must rise or fall all together. This is as it should be.

III

Suffering is vicarious. Suffering for others runs throughout nature and human life. The vegetable dies that the animal may live, and the animal dies that man may live. The parents suffer for the children.

The good suffer through a compassionate concern for the wicked.

The Crucified One, with unutterable pathos of passion and death, has blessed the world with his suffering.

There is the common atonement which is entered into by all high and heroic spirits.

The longing of St. Paul was, "That I may fill up that which is lacking of the suffering of Christ." "That I may know him and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his suffering."

David Livingstone lived through thirty attacks of African fever, but his garment of power and anguish was not woven by his transgressions, but out of his love and sympathy for others. Referring to the slave trade, he wrote: "All I can add in my solitude is, May heaven's rich blessings come down on every one who would help to heal this open sore of the world."

A short time afterwards he was found dead in an attitude of prayer. In ten years after David Livingstone's death Africa advanced more than in the previous ten centuries.

The large results of sacrificial suffering are de-

termined by the greatness of the personality who makes the sacrifice. It is preëminently true that there is power in the sacrifice of Christ, a power which uplifts the world.

Jesus accomplished good by his life. In his brief public career he brought new inspiration and strength to many lives, relieved a large amount of distress and disease, gave to the world a revelation of spiritual truth, and attracted men by his words and works.

But if Jesus had stopped short of the vicarious suffering of the cross, he would have lived in the world only as a sweet memory of a high idealist or mistaken reformer.

The death which seemed to terminate his life only disengaged and set to work the strong vital forces of his life.

> "O love of God, O sin of man,
> In this dread hour your strength is tried,
> And victory remains with love;
> Jesus our Lord is crucified."

CHAPTER XIX

SUFFERING DISCIPLINARY

While human suffering has proved to many a stumblingblock in the way of faith in a loving God, yet this form of objection may be largely removed by a consideration of the disciplinary value of suffering.

1. *Suffering reveals us to ourselves.* A knowledge that we need to possess is a knowledge of ourselves.

The hour of sorrow is the hour of self-discovery.

Unsuspected tendencies, insincerities, and latent impurities are revealed to us. The flippancy and frivolity of life are laid bare. "We abhor ourselves and repent in dust and ashes."

2. *Suffering makes clear the fundamental realities of the faith.* We believe only what we can cling to in the storm. Sorrows separate a fancied from an actual belief.

We have gone on with a comfortable supply of beliefs when all is well with us. Then there comes some frightful calamity and we turn to our beliefs, when, lo, most of them have vanished. Only one or two elemental things may be all that is left to us. We lay hold of the truths that men live by.

3. *Suffering makes possible human sympathy.* If it were not for sorrow, we would be hard and selfish and cruel. One touch of suffering makes the whole world kin.

"O wheresoever those may be
Betwixt the slumber of the poles,
To-day they count for kindred souls;
They know me not, but mourn with me."

It is a world with a great deal of sadness, failure, and despair. I do not want to add so much as a feather's weight to the suffering of men. I feel drawn to men because they are fellow-sufferers. You have suffered, therefore you are my brother. I could not have it in my heart to harbor hatred toward any human being when I remember that he suffers. Suffering works toward enlarged sympathies.

A man cannot think his way into large sympathy with his fellow man.

At the outset Job prays for his family, a narrow circle; but when he has passed through his discipline and the Lord has turned again his captivity, he prays for his friends.

Suffering enables us to comfort others. "The God of all comfort comforts us in our affliction, that we may be able to comfort others."

If we have passed under the rod, we know the language of the land in which the broken-hearted dwell.

I once stopped with a family who a few months before had lost a little girl. The mother sang at the church the solo, "I shall see him face to face." As we stood near the fresh sod at the new-made grave I spoke to the husband of the richness,

purity, and comforting power of her voice. His reply was: "It's the little girl."

4. *Suffering gives us a sense of the divine friendship.* If suffering takes the form of the failure of human friendship, it casts us back on the divine friendship. "There is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother."

> "He seems to hear a heavenly friend,
> And through thick veils to apprehend,
> A labor working to an end."

5. *Suffering clarifies the spiritual vision.* The eyes that see clearest have been bathed in tears. The surest way to God is up the lonely stream of tears.

> "I did not know, till 'neath the rod
> I passed, how sore I needed God;
> In sorrow's night, lo, like a star
> I saw his love shine from afar.
>
> I did not know, till on a grave
> I saw the wind-blown grasses wave,
> How futile and how fugitive
> The baubles are for which we strive.
>
> I did not know, until above
> God called the idol of my love,
> Beyond the reach of yearning eyes,
> How beautiful is paradise."

Suffering gives to man the one necessary thing in life, a vision of God. Mere facts and truths piled mountain high may be so much useless lumber in

the mind; but when we can say with Job, "Now mine eye seeth thee," it is then we repent in dust and ashes. God may remove perplexities regarding his providence and ways from men's minds, but he does not do so by the immediate communication of intellectual light, but by flushing all the channels of thought and life with a deeper sense of himself. Under the flow of this fuller sense of God perplexities disappear just as rocks, which raise an angry surf when the tide is low, are covered and unknown when it is full. This is the meaning of God's manifestation to Job out of the storm. He brings himself and his full glory near to Job, and fills his mind with such a sense of God as he never had before.

I am not competent to discuss the critical question as to whether the last chapter of Job, where Job's prosperity is restored twofold, is a part of the original or a later addition. I am frank to say, however, that I had rather look at the old patriarch, as he stands in the midst of his desolation, friends gone, fortune gone, and family gone, looking up with eyes made clear by the washing tears. To see God is the best answer to all of the problems and perplexities of life.

6. *Suffering is the stimulus of all progress, social and individual.* A world without trouble and suffering would be a world without progress. It is the way of personal growth and progress. Softness and ease hold no spiritual stimulus. The young

man strives to make his fortune. But it is necessity that makes him industrious. And when at fifty he stands forth a giant, as a father he reverses the divine method and shields his son, hires servants to wait on the child, and makes him soft and pulpy. He sends the boy to college when he does not want to go, and the young perfumed fashion plate drifts into the classroom occasionally for the intellectual drippings that fall from the professor's desk. He sums up his college career with the sentiment, "It is better to have come and loafed than never to have come at all." And then the father in his old age, broken-hearted over his son, asks what he has done that God should disappoint him in his children, and says with Aaron of old, "I poured in the gold and there came out this calf."

God makes men perfect through struggle and suffering.

7. Suffering purifies and develops the soul. Suffering subdues the stubborn will. Sin is self-direction, self-will. It would not do for God to let us move on smoothly in all our ways. When there are no changes, men fear not God.

Scientists tell us that bird music, which is one of nature's foremost charms, has arisen out of the bird's cry of distress in the morning of time; that originally the music of field and forest was nothing more than an exclamation caused by the bird's bodily pain and fear, and that through the ages the primal note of anguish has been evolved until

it has risen into the ecstasy of the lark, melted into the silver note of the dove, swelled into the rapture of the nightingale, and unfolded into the vast and varied music of sky and summer. The spirit of man has never given forth its sweetest, purest tones until touched by the hand of the divine musician.

"But know for all time this,
There's blood upon the way the saints have trod,
The singers of a day shall pass and die,
The world itself shall pass, who passed them by,
But they of the exceeding bitter cry,
When death itself is dead and life is bliss,
Shall stand in heaven and sing their song to God."

Raw human nature with trouble and disappointment makes supreme manhood.

"Life is not as idle ore,
But iron dug from central gloom,
And heated hot with burning fears,
And dipped in baths of hissing tears,
And battered by the shocks of doom,
To shape and use."

I am claiming to offer no final and perfect solution to this world problem of suffering. But since its result is to lift man godward, we can wait on certain mysteries. "When he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." "And now men see not the bright light which is in the clouds, but the wind passeth by and cleanseth them." "But now mine eye seeth thee."

"The cry of man's anguish went up unto God;
'Lord, take away pain,
The shadow that darkens the world thou hast made,
The close-coiling chain
That strangles the heart, the burden that weighs
On the wings that would soar,
Lord, take away pain from the world thou hast made,
That it love thee the more.'
Then answered the Lord to the cry of his world,
'Shall I take away pain,
And with it the power of the soul to endure,
Made strong by the strain?
Shall I take away pity, that knits heart to heart,
And sacrifice high?
Will ye lose all your heroes that lift from the fire
White brows to the sky?
Shall I take away love, that redeems with a price
And smiles at its loss?
Can ye spare from your lives, that would climb unto mine,
The Christ on his cross?'"

PART SIX

GOD THE FATHER IN WHOM WE ARE TO BELIEVE

CHAPTER XX

AN ENLARGING CONCEPTION OF GOD

I

THE evolutionary process on its human side is progressive development, and on its divine side progressive revelation.

Since revelation is progressive, some have come to the unwarranted conclusion that it is a natural process. But divine power is as indispensable to growth and orderly progress as it is to creation. "First the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear." "If the first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no room for the second."

The difference between the New and the Old, according to A. B. Davidson, is that the same truth is at a lower stage of development in the Old than in the New.

Two mistakes are made in the treatment of the Old Testament. The one is the mistake of leaving it without any authoritative truth. The other mistake makes it equally advanced with the New Testament. The latter mistake is the more traditional one.

To some minds it hardly stops short of sacrilege to intimate that there is not a noontide of light breaking out of the Bible everywhere.

But if the chosen people of the old covenant

possessed the same fullness of revelation that we have, they were not simply cruel, but inhuman. The revelation that was made to immature men was adapted to their immaturity. Jesus declares that God allowed some things that were not absolutely good because of the hardness of the hearts of the people. St. Paul speaks of the beggarly elements of the old worship, and St. Peter calls it an intolerable yoke.

There is growth in the conception of God.

God reveals himself through his names. In Hebrew thought names are not merely terms for distinction, but they are live things, full of significance.

As applied to men, they stand for moral qualities. As applied to God, names mark distinct steps of progress in the revelation of God's character.

The first name of God is Elohim, signifying might and power. This name is found in Genesis 1: 1. It teaches men reverence and awe.

The second name of God is El-Shaddai, God Almighty, the God who is sufficient, the God who is enough. It teaches man dependence. This name is found in Genesis 17: 1. It is used in the patriarchal age.

The third name is Jehovah, signifying the eternal and unchangeable one. This name was necessary when a host of slaves had to be fashioned into a sacred people. It gives man a sense of union and fellowship with God. This name is found in Exodus 6: 2–4. It is first used in the Mosaic age.

The fourth name is Jehovah-Sabaoth, Lord of Hosts. The experience of the exile helped to enlarge and exalt the whole conception of God. Jehovah could no longer be thought of as a mere national divinity. The exiles saw that the domain of their God was not limited to Palestine. This name is found in Psalm 46: 7. It teaches God's care over all.

The fifth name is Father, the name of Jesus for God. This name calls for filial trust and obedience.

Some writers have endeavored to prove that the earliest faith of Israel was not monotheism, but rather henotheism, or the worship of one God, while supposing at the same time that there were national gods for the other nations.

It is altogether probable that many of the Israelites at least did not deny the existence of other gods, but their God was more powerful than Chemosh of the Ammonites, and Baal of the Phœnicians. In the Hebrew conception their God was continually magnified and the other gods weakened, until there was but one God and other gods were nothing.

But whether the faith of Israel began with the conception of one God, while the other nations had their gods, or the worship of one God who was the only God, the significant fact for us is the development in the idea of God, under the inspiration of the one God.

We see this growth in the conception of God in

the difference between the God of Samuel who ordered infants to be slaughtered, and the God of the Psalmist whose tender mercies are over all his works; between the God of Genesis who walked in the garden in the cool of the day, and the God of the New Testament whom no man hath seen, or can see; between the God of Leviticus who was so particular about the sacrificial furniture and utensils, and the God of Acts who dwelleth not in temples made with hands; between the God of Exodus who is merciful only to those who love him, and the God of Jesus Christ who is kind to the unthankful and evil.

God is first worshiped for his might and power. All primitive people have deified physical strength.

A great advance was made in the conception of God when the power of God became omnipotence, as the God of might became God Almighty.

Then comes in the order of development the realization that other divine attributes are necessary beside omnipotence. A plenitude of power may exist along with fickleness and even cruelty. It is necessary to have some guarantee that the power of God shall be rightly directed.

Misdirected power is worse than weakness.

To Moses God is revealed as the unchangeable one who abides in faithful fellowship with his people. Israel may count on the faithfulness of Jehovah.

While there is no explicit statement, yet in the

revelation to Moses the spirituality of God is virtually taught in the second commandment.

In Isaiah the same truth is indirectly stated: "Now the Egyptians are men, and not God; and their horses are flesh, and not spirit."

A direct, positive statement of the spirituality of God was never made until Jesus spoke with the Samaritan woman at the well.

The gradual disclosure of the merciful character of God is one of the most obvious features of revelation. The Lord rebuked Jonah when he fell into a pet about the withering of the gourd: 'And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle?"

As to the mercifulness and limitless compassion of God, Jonah is the high water mark of the Old Testament.

The Fatherhood of God in the Old Testament is a national fatherhood, "Out of Egypt have I called my Son."

The climax of God's revelation of himself is made in Jesus Christ, who manifests the fatherhood of God.

Jesus Christ has spoken to us the authoritative word concerning the fatherly love of God. This does not imply, however, that our idea of God is ever to become static. In our modern world, with the marvelous disclosures of modern science, we

are compelled to take a wider view than did our fathers of the range and sphere of the activity of God.

II

There is the difficulty, but necessity, of enlarging our traditional conception of God. Our present difficulty is that our conception of the universe has grown faster than our thought of God. We try to place a medieval God in the midst of a modern world.

We no longer believe in the little world of our childhood which was made out of nothing in six literal days about six thousand years ago.

But what is our thought of God? John Fiske tells us that in his childhood whenever the word "God" was mentioned he saw the image of a venerable bookkeeper, with white flowing beard, standing behind a high desk, and writing down the bad deeds of John Fiske.

Poets sometimes put in a few words the ideas which would require pages of prose. Sam Walter Foss wrote "The Two Gods":

"A boy was born 'mid little things,
Between a little world and sky,
And dreamed not of the cosmic rings
Round which the circling planets fly.

He lived in little works and thoughts,
Where little ventures grow and plod,
And paced and plowed his little plots,
And prayed unto his little God.

But as the mighty system grew
His faith grew faint with many scars,
The Cosmos widened in his view,
And God was lost among his stars.

Another boy in lowly days,
As he, to little things was born,
But gathered lore in woodland ways,
And from the glory of the morn.

As wider skies broke on his view,
God greatened in his growing mind;
Each year he dreamed his God anew,
And left his older God behind.

He saw the boundless scheme dilate
In star and blossom, sky and clod;
And as the universe grew great,
He dreamed for it a greater God."

The crisis of faith with very many is a result of the disparity between the idea of God and the modern scientific conception of the world.

We are to avoid, on the one hand, the idea of God which belonged to medievalism and on the other hand a God who is a vague sort of metaphysical abstraction. Our God is to be the God who is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of our spirits, and a God who is great enough for a great universe.

We shall thus free ourselves both from a rigid traditionalism which produces the skepticism it would refute, and from a scientific materialism which deprives the universe of its sun of loveliness and plunges it into a weltering darkness of despair.

Tennyson describes the modern man, "perplext in faith":

"He fought his doubts and gathered strength,
He would not make his judgment blind,
He faced the specters of the mind
And laid them; thus he came at length

To find a stronger faith his own;
And power was with him in the night,
Which makes the darkness and the light,
And dwells not in the light alone."

John Fiske in his early study of science was an unbeliever in a personal God. Through his further scientific research he was convinced of the irresistible and overwhelming proof of God and immortality and wrote his volume, "Through Nature to God."

Romanes went into skepticism from the effort to conform his thinking to a strict traditional interpretation and came back to God like a homesick child when he gained the larger view of the divine method of God's working in our world.

Dr. W. F. Tillett writes:

The man who first criticized the traditional interpretation of the Mosaic account of creation in six literal days was accused of trying to destroy faith in the Bible; but it turned out that he was not destroying faith in the Bible, but saving it. Reinterpretation of God and the Bible may modify and destroy old interpretations, but they do not destroy faith in God or the Bible itself; they save and enrich and strengthen faith in that which liveth and abideth forever. The gods of men die and pass away, but God lives on.[1]

[1] "Paths That Lead to God." By Wilbur F. Tillett. Cokesbury Press.

There should be shown, however, the utmost consideration and sympathy for good people who find the wrench in a transition from the old to the new too painful to bear.

There are certain temperaments to which all change, however reasonable and legitimate, is extremely difficult. And this extreme conservatism of temperament is most manifest in the realm of religion. This is true because nothing else holds the imperishable values which belong to religion. It is praiseworthy to become alarmed when these supreme spiritual values appear to be imperiled. It is unfortunate, however, that these values should come to be in reality imperiled by the very people who really seek to preserve them by a mistaken "zeal without knowledge."

The new wine is wasted from trying to keep it in the old bottles. The imperishable values of our Christian faith are only safe when we live in the truth-loving spirit of him who said, "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth."

CHAPTER XXI

CAUSES WHICH RESULT IN THE ENLARGING CONCEPTION OF GOD

THERE are certain causes which make imperative and inevitable the enlarged conception of God.

I

There is the modern scientific knowledge, accompanied by the modern scientific spirit, which more than any other single factor has made a deeper cleavage between our age and the generation immediately preceding as to religious thinking than has possibly ever separated any other two generations in human history.

There is the vastness of the material universe which has weakened in some minds a faith in God's fatherly love.

> "Among so many can he care,
> Can special love be everywhere?"

The great telescope and photographic plates have multiplied by millions the eight thousand stars visible to the unaided eye. Our little earth shrinks into a dust particle. Canopus is more than two and a half million times larger than our sun.

Is our little race of men on this tiny earth any more than the "trouble of ants in the gleam of a million millions of suns"?

There are those whose faith has been crushed out by the weight of physical magnitude.

"What am I?
An infant crying in the night,
An infant crying for the light,
And with no language but a cry."

It is curious that the souls of men should have been frightened by material immensities.

It is curious that men should have forgotten even for a little while that the mind of man which measures the stars and their distances outweighs infinitely all that is merely physical.

It is a reversal of all true estimate of value to suppose that God is so occupied with the physical world that it would be too small a task to manifest on this earth his sacrificial love in Jesus Christ for the saving of humanity.

"Should science tell me that my faith in God
Is vain, since God is not, nor any need
Of him, then would I banish from my creed
All science, and take lessons from the clod,
Which, dumb and dead, like Aaron's budded rod,
Blooms yet, by miracle, to flowery mead,
Where, plain as in the Holy Book, I read
God's power and goodness written on the sod.

Not thus has science taught my grateful soul,
By starry gleam or secret cell explored,
Nor bid me dash my faith against a stone.
She buoys my faith on all the tides that roll,
And tells me, if to loftier heights I soared,
In farthest skies I should find God alone."

II

The social and democratic ideals of the present age have made necessary a change in the traditional conception of God.

Jesus Christ himself is responsible for the increasing democratic and social spirit. Kings have lately been in a bad way, and their situation gives no promise of growing any better.

> "And God said, I am tired of kings,
> I suffer them no more."

God, as King and Sovereign, is expressive of an abiding truth, but God the Father is the primary and central fact of God's relation to men. Love is the first and fundamental principle of Christianity, a love which is to guide us in our social life. To hold to the faith that it is the purpose and plan of God to bring into this world an ideal social order, the kingdom of God on earth, requires a different conception of God from that of the Adventist who is looking for a speedy termination of the world order or the individualist who is interested only in saving his individual soul. A well-known writer has said: "Extreme individualism has led to an absence of the sense of responsibility for the social order which has from the beginning maimed and distorted Protestant Christianity."

We have passed from the God of Calvinistic theology, who decided the destinies of men from before the foundation of the world, to a God whose

heart is set on a divine democracy established in our world, where men are to treat each other as brothers, and where justice and mercy shall lift the crushing burdens of poverty and despair from the backs of the unprivileged children of God. God our Father is deeply concerned that all his children have a chance in this world as well as a chance for the future heaven.

III

The study of comparative religions has altered our conception of God in his attitude toward the different races of men.

We believe that God has not left himself without witness among all the races of men.

We believe "that in every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted of him."

We no longer hold to a divine partiality, for "there is no respect of persons with God."

We no longer regard the heathen systems of belief as unmixed evil and error, and hold in haughty contempt the wisdom of their sages. All earnest seekers after God have caught gleams of the divine word and the divine wisdom. The Divine Spirit has constantly brooded over all the races of humanity.

Instead of giving a grudging recognition to the presence of God in all nations and religions, it is of immense apologetic value to realize that our faith

in God is broad-based on the universal religious instincts and spiritual aspirations of humanity.

While we must avoid on the one hand an undue depreciation of heathen systems of belief, we must also avoid the exaggeration of the mere closet idealist. The superiority of Christianity over the loftiest system of heathenism is readily discernible.

While the Christian attitude should be one of recognition of the divine presence in all the yearning and striving toward ethical ideals, yet Jesus Christ should be held forth as the consummation and fulfillment of all the imperfect ideas and ideals and the age-long religious search of mankind.

Streeter in "Reality" writes:

> To the philosopher the most remarkable feature about Christianity is its central position as a kind of synthesis of all the higher religions. Intellectually, its theistic conception of God comprehends the deism of the Mohammedan and the Pantheism of the Hindu; emotionally it fuses the disciplined restraint of Confucius with the fervor of Indian devotion; ethically it stands as the climax which unifies developments and tendencies which elsewhere only partially achieve maturity. Add to this the fact that it is the one religion which has really "faced up to" the problem of evil, and we see that every philosopher must start off with a consideration of Christianity as being, as it were, the "typeform" of religion.[1]

IV

A further cause which results in a larger conception of God is the changed method of Biblical interpretation.

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[1] "Reality." By B. H. Streeter. The Macmillan Company.

The historic spirit in the study of literature which began with Lessing and Herder in the eighteenth century was revolutionary in its effects. Since the Bible was the revelation of a historic religion, it soon became evident that it could rightly claim no exemption from the application of the historical method.

The better understanding of the literature of the Bible prevents us from hardening poetical imagery and poetical descriptions of God into literal prose.

The Bible has come to be interpreted according to its purpose, which was a religious one, and therefore it is not to be regarded as an authority on modern science.

We can readily see that the idea of God made necessary by modern science is a widely different idea from that which belonged to ancient science. However, bitter opposition has always been the hard lot of those who have not interpreted the Bible as authority on modern science.

Augustine said to the scientists of his day, "If you assert that people can live on the other side of the earth, you give the lie direct to the Holy Ghost."

Both Calvin and Luther opposed Copernicus, and Luther called him a fool because he contradicted the book of Joshua in which it is clearly stated that the sun moves while the earth stands still.

Henry Drummond has well said: "If the purpose of the Bible had been to teach science, it would

have taught medicine first of all, since that is the most useful science."

When opposition was aroused against Bishop Colenzo, following his book on the Pentateuch with its sane interpretation, he exclaimed, "Shall a man speak lies in the name of the Lord?"

The historical method gave us furthermore the idea of the progressiveness of the revelation, or it rather placed emphasis on the idea which Jesus himself declared. This made necessary the larger conception of God, since we were not fettered by the former inadequate and imperfect notions of God. "God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in a Son."

We now attribute the imputation to God of acts of cruelty to the imperfect understanding of God in the earlier stages of the progressive revelation of God. We are relieved of the necessity of defending God, when we accept as final authority the revelation of Jesus, who gave a perfect manifestation of God the Father whose love is special to each man and universal to all men.

In answer to the earnest inquirer after God, Jesus replied: "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."

V

A final cause which necessitates a larger conception of God in our modern world is the magnitude

and complexity of our present world civilization. This is in contrast with the comparative simplicity of ancient life and society.

The population of the world is vaster, the intermingling of the races of men is more pronounced, and the problems of the world are more acute.

The relationships of humanity are more intricate. Modern industry has dispensed with the jack of all trades, and as vocations have been specialized people have become correspondingly more interdependent and interrelated. Political life has changed from the self-sufficiency of a tribe and the separateness of a state to the absolute necessity of harmonious international relationships. Our highly complex civilization with the drift to the cities is widely different from a primitive simplicity of life in which men lived closer to nature and the soil. Faith came easy as men lived near the first cause of things.

> "Back of the loaf is the snowy flour,
> And back of the flour the mill,
> And back of the mill the wheat and the shower,
> The sun and the Father's will."

In this situation we are to pierce through the thin shows and superficialities of our complex modern life and show to men their dependence upon God and upon nature, and that even the withholding of rain could cause the collapse of our boasted civilization, and that one nation that violates the will of God can throw a world into consternation. With

this lesson of our dependence we are to proclaim the God who is all-sufficient for the needs of men, and for the harmonizing of the nations of men.

There is no reason for alarm in the representation of our changing conceptions of God. The stars and the sun and the earth and the light and the heat have remained unchanged in their beneficent ministry despite the varying theories which have been held concerning their natures and essence.

Humanity has passed from many gods to one God, from one God of a favored nation to one God of all the nations, from a God of mere power to a God of love, but through all the increasing understanding of God, "He is the same yesterday, today, and forever."

CHAPTER XXII

THE SENSE OF THE REALITY OF GOD AND THE SUPREMACY OF THE SPIRITUAL

I

It would be a very doubtful gain, or more correctly a loss, if with a larger and truer conception of God we come to have a feebler realization of him. To know about God more and to know God less would be too high a price to pay for even an increase in knowledge.

Thoughtful modern minds with increasing consciousness of our lack face us to-day, saying in effect, You give up old ways of thinking about God's relationship with us and with the world. Very well, but how then do you conceive that fundamental matter? What is your way of putting the truth so that we can see it, understand it, organize our faith around it, and live triumphantly on the basis of it? We cannot positively live either on negations concerning old ways of thinking or on experiences expressed in them, enjoyed, but not thought through nor understood. The fault of some liberalism is not only the absence of a constructive mental contribution, but the more serious lack of moral earnestness.

There is the inclination to rest in an easy faith

on the ongoing, developing processes of life, without any sacrificial coöperation.

Tennyson described this false optimism:

"Is then evil but on earth? or pain in every peopled sphere?
Well, be grateful for the sounding watchword 'evolution here,'
Evolution ever climbing after some ideal good,
And reversion ever dragging evolution in the mud."

A thin type of liberalism bases hope on the "ever-climbing" process, without the earnest coöperation of the human personality.

This kind of liberalism so exhausts itself with liberality of views that it makes this a substitute for liberality of money or a liberal expenditure of energy toward the cause of righteousness and the kingdom of God.

Dr. W. F. Tillett says:

> God ought to be a greater God to us than he was to the Hebrew prophets or to the early Christian fathers. He has wrought wonders in the world since these ancient believers lived and died, and God ought to mean more to us than to them, and our conception and interpretation of him ought to bring him nearer to us. This closer and deeper experience with God ought to make him more real to us; and this is really the final test of the correctness of our answer to the question we have been asking as to who he is, what he is, and where he is. Is our conception of God reënforced by reality in experience and by correspondingly lofty types of manhood and womanhood in those who have this conception?[1]

This is one way out, a vital knowledge and ex-

[1] "Paths That Lead to God." By Wilbur F. Tillett. Cokesbury Press.

perience with God which keeps pace with our increased knowledge about God. It was inevitable that a measure of unsatisfactory vagueness should accompany that period where life is

> "Wandering between two worlds, one dead
> And the other powerless to be born."

The world, however, in which, with a larger conception of God, the soul shall have the vital sense of his certainty, is not "powerless to be born."

It is worse than useless to indulge in sentimental sighing over the old days and old conceptions which never can return. We must work our way out by filling all the contents of modern knowledge with the presence and purpose of God. A fresh consciousness of God is our supreme need.

How shall we keep alive and potent in life the sense of God's reality?

1. Negatively, we must avoid that absorption in the things which are seen which obscures the vision of spiritual values. The trouble is not in the effort to live, but in that all-absorbing greed for gain that is never satisfied with a living. There are men who listen to the appeals of truth and yet who think more about how they may make a dollar than how they may bring their lives in touch with the higher motive of living. The glitter and glare and glory and pomp of the world fill their eyes.

We must lay aside the pride and vanity of life which is always self-centered.

Selfishness is always blind. There are people who care very little for human creatures outside their own narrow circle. They will stint and starve themselves for their own, but their self-denial goes no farther.

Selfishness puts out the eyes of the spirit.

John Ruskin has written:

> It is not possible that selfishness should reason rightly in any respect, but must be blind in its estimate of the worthiness of all things; neither anger, for that overpowers the reason or outcries it; neither sensuality, for that overgrows and chokes it; neither agitation, for that has no time to compare things together; neither enmity, for that must be unjust; neither fear, for that exaggerates all things; neither cunning and deceit, for that which is voluntarily untrue will soon be unconsciously so—but the great reasons are self-command, and trust unagitated, and deepest love and faith.

"The world is dark to thee; thyself art the reason why."

2. Positively, we are to see God in nature and in our enlarged universe. If the heavens of the ancient world declared the glory of God, how much more do the countless shining orbs known to modern science declare his glory.

(1) There must be an earnest desire to see God. Amiel, a great saint and mystic, said: "The number of beings who wish to see truly is extraordinarily small." Men fail to see, because they do not wish to see. There must be response to the light. There comes to the dullest vision the element of light if there is response to the light.

(2) Again, only in the element of love can we see the Father, that God who is love. A heart of malice cannot see anything good: it sees only its own imaginary wrongs.

> "In vain shalt thou or any call
> The spirits from their golden day,
> Except like them thou too can'st say,
> 'My spirit is at peace with all.'"

Love is the light of life and mirrors the divine, where

> "The memory is like a cloudless air
> And conscience as a sea at rest.
> But when the heart is full of din,
> And doubt beside the portals waits,
> They can but listen at the gates
> And hear the household jar within."

(3) Finally, obedience to Jesus Christ is the organ of spiritual knowledge. "He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

We shall come to a luminous knowledge of God in Jesus Christ as we obey him in the service of our fellow men. When we treat man as an immortal, our vivid realization of eternal values is increased, and we see Christ in the life to which we minister. "For inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these my little ones, ye did it unto me."

Phillips Brooks said: "Here is the last great certainty. Be sure of God. By simple loving worship, by purifying yourselves even as he is pure, by con-

tinual moral obedience, creep close to him, keep close to him. Be sure of God, and in the end nothing can overthrow you."

II

We are to believe in a God who places supreme valuation on the spiritual. A mistaken interpretation of the immanence of God carries the implication that since the activity of God moves in the small as in the great, therefore God has no discrimination as to values. This idea of God is expressed in the familiar lines:

> "He sees with equal eyes, as God of all,
> The hero perish or the sparrow fall."

Jesus Christ reveals to us the worth of man, the worth of one man, and God's love for man: "There is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth." But it is the spiritual in man on which God places the highest estimate. "Man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth."

The goal of God's purpose in the world is the spiritualization of man.

The Bible is the supreme and authoritative book of religion which, from the first promise, "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head," to the final consummation, when the redeemed throng shall stand before God with garments white in the blood of the Lamb, is ever stating the fact of the supremacy of the spiritual and the spiritual goal

of humanity. Since the Bible thus cuts across the grain of selfish human nature, it has aroused the intense and bitter opposition of men.

The sacred Scriptures went through the trial of logic in the opposition of Celsus. It went through the trial by fire in the ten severe persecutions under Roman emperors. There was the threefold aim of the suppression of public worship, the destruction of the individual believer, and the destruction of the Holy Scriptures.

Then came afterwards the arguments of destructive criticism. And yet through the trial by logic, by fire, and by skeptical mutilation, the pure gold of God's word abides, "And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain."

Jesus Christ is the perfect revelation of the estimate which God the Father places on the spiritual values.

There is no encouragement in the words or works of Jesus for that shallow sort of philanthropy and that thin type of humanitarianism which ignores the spiritual need of humanity. Whether in conversation with the Samaritan woman, or in a work of physical healing, Jesus passes from the material to place his emphasis upon the spiritual. The more we come under the power of his matchless personality the better able we are "to discern the things which are excellent."

According to Jesus the fundamental aim of life is spiritual. There is the modern parable of the three laborers. They were working on a stone. A stranger asked the first what he was doing. "I am cutting this stone," growled the laborer. "And you?" the stranger asked the second. "I am working for $7.50 a day," he replied. When the question was put to the third stonecutter, he answered, "I am building a cathedral."

We cannot but believe that the supreme concern of God is for the spiritual and for the development of the spiritual in man. Dr. H. A. Youtz writes:

> The ideals of the moral spirit are forever finding themselves in contest with the processes of nature. The mechanisms and animalisms of life are forever confronting us and soliciting the place of authority and primacy. The spiritualizing of life, the bringing of every mechanical and animal ideal into obedience to the behests of the moral spirit, is the supernatural undertaking, therefore, required of every person who will win moral personality.[2]

If we are to accept the authority of Jesus Christ, the ultimate goal of humanity is the spiritual, and the preëminent values of human life are the spiritual.

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[2] "The Supremacy of the Spiritual." By H. A. Youtz. The Macmillan Company.

CHAPTER XXIII

SOME CONTRASTED IDEAS OF GOD

I

THE God in whom we are to believe is a God of law. There are clearer indications of intelligent design in cosmos than in chaos. A universe of law is more worthy of a Supreme Creator than a universe of caprice.

1. *There is the medieval theological conception of a lawless world.* Before a knowledge of astronomical laws the sun was pushed out into the heavens, and the stars were hung up in the firmament every night by the right hand of God.

Both John Knox and Martin Luther claimed that comets were signs of the wrath of heaven. Halley made known the fact that the comet's motion was determined, not by the prayers of people, but by law.

When Newton explained the motion of all the heavenly bodies, he was accused by theologians of substituting Blind Gravitation for God.

Rain was supposed to result from God or his angels "opening the windows of heaven" to let down upon the earth the waters that were above the firmament.

Witches were put to death for raising storms.

Various natural evils were caused by demons.

Bells were first put into church steeples not as a call to worship, but to scare the devils out of the thunder clouds. The demons inflicted diseases upon the body. They were exorcised by burning asafetida or sulphur and sometimes the victims were beaten. Demons and not a disorder of the brain were supposed to be the cause of insanity, and there was the most brutal treatment of the insane.

The explanation of disease was not uniform, but it was supposed to be the direct interposition either of God or of diabolical agencies. As a rule the leaders of the Church opposed the theory that disease was due to natural causes. As a result sanitation was ignored. Lord Palmerston refused the request of the Scotch clergy that a fast day be observed to ward off cholera and advised them to go home and clean their streets.

As late as 1893 the Bishop of Pennsylvania issued a special call to prayer against cholera. One clergyman refused to respond and declared that to do so, with the filthy condition of streets prevailing in Philadelphia, would be blasphemous.

Medievalism relied on amulets, charms, shrines, relics of saints, sacred wells, sacred places, and the royal touch as antidotes to disease.

An immense sacrifice of life was due to want of hygienic precaution. There was no prevalent conception of natural law. Every act that was not human was traced to a superhuman source, and miracles were multiplied. In a map of the sixteenth

century the earth was a sphere, and at each pole there was a crank with an angel turning it.

2. *There is the modern conception of a world of law and order.* A world of law and order is a much better arena for the exercise of faith than a world of confusion and anarchy.

It has been absurdly supposed that, when we find the method by which an act was done, we thereby dispense with the agent.

There is no creative power in a method. If theologians have erred on the side of crude supernaturalism, some scientists have erred on the side of bald naturalism.

At a meeting of the American Association of Astronomers, Prof. F. R. Moulton, of the University of Chicago, released some astounding statements as to the size and duration of the universe. He fixed the number of stars in our own galaxy at six billions, while other galaxies, he said, are distant from us a million light years. He thinks our earth is yet young and will likely last a million billion years. But after considering all these overwhelming calculations, Professor Moulton remarks:

> The thing that impresses me most is not the immense size of that part of the physical universe which we have explored, nor its long duration, nor the great forces at play, but it is the fact that it is orderly. The fundamental fact upon which science rests is that it is orderly.

The modern man sees God in the light of his law and love rather than in the darkness of chaos,

confusion, gaps, exceptional marvels, and in the realm of the lawless. We accept the declaration of Browning:

> "I report the world as I saw it;
> All is Love, yet all is Law."

We cannot believe that an intelligent world which can be largely interpreted by the human mind is itself mindless.

3. *It is a favorite delusion of the human mind that as nature is reduced to law and order God becomes unnecessary.* In the controversy of the last century, James Clark Maxwell said: "There never was a theory of the universe that did not need a God to make it go."

Even Herbert Spencer wrote: "The atheistic theory is not only absolutely unthinkable, but even if it were thinkable, would offer no solution of life and the universe in which that life is found."

It is the universality of law that enhances the wisdom and power and love of God. He is both a God of law and a God of love. We see the footprints of the Creator in the reign of law with a clearness that was impossible in the confusion and darkness of a world that was not understood.

In the light of modern astronomy "the heavens declare the glory of God," with the millions of shining orbs marching through space with mathematical precision, in accents more positive than was possible in the ancient world.

In the light of modern geology the earth declares that glory of God with an emphasis unknown to the ancient world.

II

There are two contrasted, but not opposing, ideas of God, his transcendence and his immanence. Either idea becomes false only when carried to an extreme. To stress the immanence of God and deny his transcendence is pantheism. To stress the transcendence of God and deny his immanence is deism. This according to Carlyle is "An absentee God outside the world watching it go." God is like an engineer who starts his train and then lets it go without any further interference. On the other hand, to give such emphasis to the immanence of God as to identify everything with God is to stretch out the divine into such thinness that no God is left. Jesus blended into a perfect description these contrasted ideas of God when he speaks of God as clothing the grass of the field and feeding the birds of the air. St. Paul gives voice to the same idea of God: "In him we live, and move, and have our being."

When these contrasted ideas blend we have a God who is above nature and the world, who is superior to nature and the world, but who is in all the activities and processes of nature and the world.

1. *In a true statement of the immanence of God*

there is always present the idea of divine transcendence, so that our discussion will have to do for the most part with the more neglected idea of divine immanence.

The universe is the body of God, something like our own bodies are the dwelling places of living spirits. The poets sing this doctrine.

Mrs. Browning says:

> "Earth's crammed with heaven,
> And every common bush afire with God,
> But only he who sees, takes off his shoes."

Wordsworth writes:

> "I have felt
> A presence that disturbs me with the joy
> Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
> Of something far more deeply interfused
> Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
> And the round ocean and the living air,
> And the blue sky and in the mind of man.
> A motion and a spirit that impels
> All thinking things; all objects of all thoughts,
> And rolls through all things."

> "Thy voice is on the rolling air,
> I hear thee where the waters run,
> Thou standest in the rising sun
> And in the setting thou art fair.
>
> Far off thou art, but ever nigh;
> I have thee still, and I rejoice;
> I prosper, circled with thy voice;
> I shall not lose thee though I die."

The lines of Holmes make recognition of both the transcendence and immanence of God;

"Lord of all being throned afar,
Whose glory flames from star to star,

Center and soul of every sphere,
Yet to each loving heart how near."

These two phases of the description of God must be held in such perfect balance as to retain the personality, spirituality, and freedom of God.

We are to be on our guard against the overemphasis of immanence which runs easily into the peril of pantheism.

God is the foundation energy in nature and in human life. By his power all things are sustained. Even in the wrongs man commits there is the perversion of the power which God gives to man. But this is not to say that "all activities are divine," and that "God thinks and feels in our thinking and feeling and blunders in our blundering."

This would be to make God the supreme sinner, to efface all distinction between the divine and the human, and to change conscience from a voice of authority to a voice of delusion.

This notion deprives man of his personality and changes God into an infinite abstraction. The personality of God and the personality of man stand or fall together.

If we are to reject the pantheistic God who does everything, even the wrongs of men, which means a virtual negation of God, we are also to reject the deistic God who does nothing, an idle, useless God.

It is of such a God that Carlyle says: "God sits in heaven and does nothing."

God the Father, who is immanent in our world, the source of all energy, does not domineer over the personality of man, does not browbeat the freedom of man, but God the Father brings the impact of his spirit on our spirits, strives with us in all our upward striving, strives against us in all our misdirected energy, kindles the flames of all our holy impulses, pours his strength into all our soaring aspirations. He is with sinners, with men who have lost the way, with men who are burdened and perplexed and discouraged. He is not a God far off, but a God that is helping us bear the burdens of hard experiences and who yearns to make us one with him.

> "Thou life within my life than self more near;
> Thou veiled Presence infinitely clear;
> From all illusive shows of sense I flee
> To find my center and my rest with thee."

But all this is in a very old Book:

O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and my uprising, thou understandest my thoughts afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether. Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it. Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I

take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee. For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them. How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand: when I awake, I am still with thee.

2. *Against the materialistic faith in the self-sufficiency of natural forces, the faith in the immanence of God in our world holds to the self-sufficiency of God.* It is becoming more evident that God is either having more to do with the world than men have been accustomed to expect, or he has nothing to do with it.

Our idea of the range and extent of divine activities needs to be widened.

There is not only the continuous manifestation of God, but the continuous creation of God. Our world is an unfinished world.

The whole world which would oppress us as a nightmare if we thought God was through with it now fills us with a sense of hope and boundless possibility. A finished world would be the death of all

faith; a world now rising, unfolding, now being molded into a divine shape, and therefore half-divine, half-devilish to-day—that is the world which enables us to believe in God the Father.

The great Apostle spoke of "God's working which worketh in us mightily." He is forcing his way through gross materials and gross minds, slowly triumphing over grossness and stupidity and hatred, changing the quality of human lives by drawing them unto himself and moving irresistibly toward the glorious consummation. He is working good out of evil and making the wrath of men to praise him.

"Yet I doubt not through the ages one increasing purpose runs,
And the thoughts of men are widened with the process of the suns."

Instead of the changeless spectacle of a finished world, we see God putting forth infinite energy and sharing in our toil.

In the place of an idle, absentee God, we have an immanent personal spirit whose essence is not contemplation, but activity, whose unfolding purpose is the explanation of all that is, and the assurance that the universe shall not fail.

God is manifest in the present as ever he was in the past.

"God is not dumb that he should speak no more;
If thou art wandering in life's wilderness and find not God,
'Tis thy soul is poor."

We cannot believe that all communication of God with men stopped somewhere about 100 A.D.

To deny that God is now speaking to his world is virtually to deny that he has ever spoken. The heresy of all heresies is to shut God out of the present. If God has ever worked at all, he is always working, not in the past alone, or to work sometime in the far future, but equally in the present.

God is as truly manifest in the normal working of laws in the physical and spiritual realms as he was in the exceptionally miraculous.

To limit God to distinctive miraculous performances is to shut him out of our modern world. God has always been more manifest through the religious experiences of the saints than through special miracles, though there are those who seek God in the abnormal and exceptional. The transfigured lives of the saints of God are more convincing of the presence and activity of God in the world than supernatural signs flashed in the sky and angelic visitation.

God is as truly present in the so-called secular as in the sacred realms of life. There are those who think of God as present in the sanctuary and in his holy temple, but not in the marts of trade.

We must not think of God as present only in sacred times as if the Sabbath belonged to God while the other six days belong to us, in which we can practically ignore God. We are not to esteem as sacred only certain callings, as the ministry.

Every legitimate vocation is sacred. Every calling is to be a partnership with God for the manifestations of his righteous power and the extension of his kingdom. No part of life is common or unclean.

We are to see God as he works in all the manifold realms of activity in our world. The little girl looked up into the open sky and asked, "Papa, what does God do all day long?" Jesus gives the answer: "My father worketh even until now, and I work."

Dr. J. H. Snowden writes:

> The pagan idea has not been wholly eliminated from our minds that God has nothing to do. Labor is a disagreeable thought to us and seems degrading to God. But the Bible boldly represents God as a laborer, and this is an infinitely higher and nobler view of him than that of pagan thought and medieval art. The notion of an inactive and passive God is gone. He toils with the toilers, weeps with them that weep, and rejoices with them that rejoice. He is energizing in all the forces of the world that are struggling up through visions of better things to victory. He is in the spirit of widening good that is drawing all men into a new sense of unity and brotherhood and preparing the way for the Republic of God on earth.[1]

We are to be partakers of the love and patience of God in the slow but sure process of making a redeemed world for humanity.

There is the inconsistency of the impatience of the men who profess to believe in the infinite patience of God. We have the curious spectacle of men who take pleasure in being called modern in

[1] "The Personality of God." By J. H. Snowden. The Macmillan Company.

their truer conception of God and yet who become impatient with Fundamentalists because they are not made over in a day. They claim that God takes a long period of time to make new adjustments in nature and at the same time become irritated at Fundamentalists because they do not make readjustments in a brief time. We must share the patience of God, "Who shall not fail nor be discouraged" and who ever works in patient love.

Dr. C. R. Brown forcefully says:

> The God in whom I believe is not sitting down. He is on his feet, alert, active, militant. His arms are not folded; now they are stretched out to help and relieve, now they are tense in their combat with evil. His eyes are not closed. He that watches over all these interests, infinitely precious in his sight, neither slumbers nor sleeps. He is the living God. He is living at this hour an active, vigilant, redemptive life. He will forever live and act until he has put all enemies under his feet, and has made all the kingdoms of human interest kingdoms of his Christ.[2]

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[2] "Why I Believe in Religion." By C. R. Brown. The Macmillan Company.

PART SEVEN
DOING THE WILL OF GOD THE FATHER

CHAPTER XXIV

BELIEF ABOUT CHRIST—FAITH IN CHRIST

It is an intellectual and spiritual necessity that we should have an adequate belief about Christ.

At the same time there is a very great difference between belief about Christ and faith in Christ. It has been truly and forcefully said, "Any faith in him, however small, is better than any belief about him, however great."

I

A mere belief about the spiritual verities goes no farther than the intellectual logical processes. Christianity is essentially a belief, not in a system but in God, a belief not in a creed but in Christ, a belief not about a dogma but in a person.

A man may be so traditionally orthodox in his opinion that the greatest stickler for orthodoxy could detect no flaw in his belief and yet be utterly destitute of true piety.

1. *No senseless tirade should be made against the historic creeds.* They have performed and continue to perform a necessary function. However, a churchman may swallow every letter of all the ancient creeds without any feeling of intellectual difficulty and remain without the life of Christ in

his life. Men have held without question to the Apostles' Creed and to the Nicene Creed and yet have been cruel toward their fellow men with a mercilessness of zeal which put them to death. It is painfully depressing to think of the bloodshed which has followed a fanatical devotion to religious creeds.

Aside from the more tragical phase which results from a blind devotion to a creed within itself, the creed leaves the life without any transformation of spirit.

As a Roman Catholic, you may believe in the Immaculate Conception and be anything but immaculate yourself.

As an Episcopalian, you may swallow without any hesitation the doctrine of apostolic succession without having any of the apostolic spirit.

As a Baptist or Presbyterian, you may hold unswervingly to the final perseverance of the saints and yet be very far from persevering in your own conduct.

As a Methodist, you may receive without question the possibility of apostasy and then practice it in order, I suppose, to be consistent with your belief.

The Church at different times in her history has drawn up creeds and pronounced anathemas on all who dared to differ, but good people have borne her anathemas and have gone on singing, shouting, praying, believing, and loving their way to heaven.

2. *You may believe all the contents of the Bible, even to the inspiration of the punctuation marks, and at the same time remain unchristian in your spirit.* You may hold tenaciously to the doctrine of future retribution and all the time be storing up against yourself vengeance in the day of wrath. You may hold without any shadow of doubt to all the miracles and have no miracle of grace in your own life. You may believe that the Bible is the Word of God without any mixture of human error or infirmity, and remain worldly, selfish, avaricious, intolerant, and uncharitable.

Churchmen have been so devoted to the letter of the Scripture that they have construed into the advocacy of physical violence the words of Jesus, "Compel them to come in," and have perpetrated all the horrors of the inquisition.

They have construed as a divine, infallible injunction, "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live," and have persecuted to death thousands of unfortunate human beings.

It is sometimes said that a man cannot read the Bible through without becoming a Christian. The remark may be made because it sounds pious, but it is without a particle of truth. It is possible for you to read the Bible through a score of times and hold on to a selfish heart and a sinful life.

What does Jesus say? "You search the Scriptures, imagining you possess eternal life in their

pages, and they do testify to me, but ye refuse to come to me for life."

3. *A man may believe in the omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, justice, mercy, and holiness of God and his life be out of harmony with God.* It is not sufficient to believe right about God; we must be right with God. The devils have a belief about God, but it is without saving effect.

4. *You may believe all the facts connected with the mission and ministry of Jesus and yet possess nothing of the spirit of Jesus.* You may believe in his incarnate life and fail to incarnate his spirit in your own life. You may believe in his atoning death and selfishly refuse to share in the suffering of another life. You may believe in his resurrection and never be raised yourself into newness of life.

We may believe a great many things about Christ and receive none of his spirit.

II

It is through faith in Christ that we become partakers of the divine nature, and reproduce and live out in our own lives the life of Christ.

Faith in Christ is an act of trust by which one person who is a sinner commits himself to another person who is a Saviour. This saving faith is the actual movement of man's whole personality to identify itself with and lose itself in the personality of Christ.

The discrimination which I have endeavored to

show between belief about Christ and faith in Christ is expressed by another as the religion about Jesus and the religion of Jesus.

There are plenty of people who have a religion about Jesus who are dominated by personal animosities, by social snobbery, by racial enmities, who are narrow nationalists, rampant militarists, and hard-headed industrial oppressors. Some of the most malicious and meanest-spirited people I have ever known have had their decided convictions as to a religion about Jesus. It never occurred to them that the one essential thing is the religion of Jesus.

Christlikeness is the heart and soul of Christianity. John Wesley has said in effect that a loud-mouthed speaker may bawl out platitudes about doctrine, free salvation, and justification by faith, and his hearers will exclaim, What a wonderful gospel sermon; but they lose their enthusiasm if another tells them that to be a Christian is to live as Christ lived.

The editor of a secular newspaper said: "According to statistics there are 576,000,000 Christians in the world. We sometimes have our hours of depression when we wonder where they live."

Our world will never be won to Jesus Christ unless professed Christian people live the religion of Jesus and reproduce and incarnate in their own lives his love and compassion and forgiveness.

Dr. E. Stanley Jones, the author of "The Christ

of the Indian Road," in conversation with Mahatma Gandhi, asked him what could be done to lead India to accept Christ.

The main part of Gandhi's reply was: "First, I would suggest that all of you, Christian missionaries and all, must begin to live more like Jesus Christ. Second, I would suggest that you must practice your religion without adulterating it or toning it down. Third, I would suggest that you must put your emphasis on love, for love is the center and soul of Christianity."

We must in reality accept Jesus, not only as the truth, but as the way and the life.

Belief about Jesus Christ is not sufficient: there must be faith in Jesus Christ.

The religion about Jesus Christ is not sufficient: there must be the religion of Jesus Christ.

Again Dr. E. Stanley Jones writes:

> We must call men not to loyalty to a belief, but loyalty to a Person. We may be loyal to a belief and be dead spiritually, but we cannot be loyal to this Person and be other than alive spiritually. He created belief. He is the great Believer himself, and in the light of his radiant faith we cannot but believe. But we do not get Jesus from our beliefs; we get our beliefs from Jesus. And they must of necessity be under constant correction by his mind and spirit.[1]

We can never sincerely question our obligation to be loyal to Jesus Christ whatever portion of our

[1] "The Christ of the Indian Road." By E. Stanley Jones. Copyright 1925. Used by permission of the Abingdon Press.

long creed or traditional notions we may outgrow and leave behind.

Our spiritual safety is not in adherence to all the items of an elaborately wrought out creed, but in an unswerving devotion to Jesus Christ.

The incident is given of a great storm a few years ago which descended on the New England coast when scores of vessels were wrecked. The ships that were safest at the height of the hurricane were not those that were moored at their docks on the shore. Many of them were pounded to pieces. It was not those ships that were without any anchorage, drifting on the high seas. Some of these vanished and were never heard from. But those ships were safest that were anchored at one point by one stout cable and then left free to sway and swing with the changing winds and tides of the ocean.

The men who are most secure amid the religious fluctuations of our age are not those who are fastened at every point to the laborious creeds of the past, not those who drift unattached and aimless, but those who are anchored by one great loyalty to our Lord, and then are free to adapt themselves to the growing knowledge of an expanding universe and to the changing needs of their generation.

III

The objection will be inevitably raised that this discrimination is an attempt to make a distinction

without a difference. But unfortunately the illustrations are too abundant that orthodoxy as to doctrine has existed along with heterodoxy as to practice in many sincere but mistaken churchmen. It was a strange perversion of Christianity in Calvin, who gave his sanction to the burning of Servetus at the stake.

To avoid unnecessary misunderstanding, I will say again that the doctrines are necessary to thinking human beings, but there has been a misplaced emphasis on orthodoxy to the neglect of orthopraxy. If more stress had been placed on the religion of Jesus, and the Christlike spirit and conduct, the doctrines would have been saner and truer and freer from a lopsided emphasis.

Mark Twain is quoted as saying that as he studied the cathedrals of Europe the points of emphasis in the Catholic Church seemed to be in the following order: (1) The Church, (2) The Virgin Mary, (3) The Fathers of the Church, (4) The Saints, (5) The Creed, (6) The Bible, (7) God, (8) Christ.

But even if the doctrinal emphasis had been rightly placed, it would have afforded no guarantee of Christian living, for it is not belief about Christ that makes the life Christlike, but faith in Christ. It is important to have a well-defined creed, the truer the better, but no belief in the doctrines or the sacraments of the Church can save a human life.

Dr. G. T. Rowe, in a recent volume, gives an

incident which happened in the Kentucky mountains when a protracted meeting was in progress at the Christian Church, commonly called the Campbellite Church. One Craig Tolliver was a dreaded desperado, with a very ugly record. A committee from the Church called on the old man and invited him to be baptized and join the Church. He was very approachable and said: "Yes, I reckon if there is anything Tol needs it is religion. Everybody says so, and I guess it's a fact. But the trouble is that nobody can tell me what religion is, and how to get it. The Presbyterians had a meeting and talked about election; and I guess that is all right. I would like for God to vote for me, and that is all I know about it. Then the Methodists had a meeting and they shouted and kept up an awful fuss, but the shouting didn't help me any. What I want to know is what religion is and how to get it. Now you folks say if I go into the river and be baptized I will get religion, and then I will know what it is. Now that is plain; I can understand that, and I have made up my mind to do it. But mark my words, if Craig Tolliver goes down into that old muddy creek and comes up out of thar and ain't got no religion, you had better take to the woods." When the pastor of the Church was asked if he baptized him, he replied: "I didn't. You know theories don't always pan out in practice." One is always on safe ground, however, to assure any man, irrespective of his past character, that through

faith in Jesus Christ he will be saved. It may be freely admitted, however, that multitudes have been forgiven and saved by faith in Jesus Christ who did not begin to understand all the implications of that faith; for the implications are that I wholly commit my nature to Jesus Christ to receive his nature, that I am not merely brought to a place of safety, but I am brought into a spiritual fellowship with God, that I receive the character of Jesus Christ and become at heart a savior.

This is the religion of Jesus.

This is what it means to be saved.

St. Paul, the greatest interpreter of Christianity, tells us: "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."

Dr. Rowe, in the volume referred to in the chapter on "The Essence of Christianity," writes:

> A man may belong to the Church, he may regulate his life by approved rules of conduct, he may diligently perform all tasks assigned to him, he may be skilled in doctrinal definition, but if he lacks the Spirit of Jesus he is not a Christian. Positively Paul says: "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." In the Greek, having the mind is expressed by one word, a verb, and it means to think or to feel. The apostle is urging us to think and feel like Jesus Christ. Let this mind, this animus, this disposition, this spirit, be in you which was in Christ Jesus. In the midst of an elaborate discussion of spiritual gifts, Paul bursts out into a wonderful prose poem, in which he declares that nothing can take the place of love that is the fruit of the Spirit of Christ.

According to Jesus himself, a vital faith, a genuine

religion, is to share the love of God for all men, a love like that revealed by Jesus.

John Wesley manifested his preëminence as a Christian, as an advocate of the religion of Jesus in the words:

> I will not quarrel with you about any mere opinion. Only see that your heart be right toward God; that you know and love the Lord Jesus Christ; that you love your neighbor and walk as your Master walked; and I desire no more. I am sick of opinions, I am weary to bear them. My soul loathes this frothy food. Give me solid and substantial religion; give me a humble and gentle lover of God and man; a man full of mercy and good fruits without partiality and without hypocrisy; a man laying himself out in the work of faith, the patience of hope, the labor of love. Let my soul be with these Christians, whosoever they are, and whatsoever opinion they are of.

It is the religion about Jesus which has produced separations and divisions, denominational conflicts, and bitter intolerance. It is the religion of Jesus which is the unifying power in the Christian Church.

Dr. E. Stanley Jones writes:

> For at the central place of our experience of Jesus we are one. It is Christ who unites us; it is doctrines that divide. As some one has suggested, if you ask a congregation of Christians "What do you believe?" there will be a chorus of conflicting beliefs, for no two persons believe exactly alike. But if the question is asked, "Whom do you trust?" then we are together. If the emphasis in our approach to Christianity is "what," then it is divisive; but if the emphasis is "whom," then we are drawn together at the place of this Central Magnet. One has the tendency of the centrifugal and the other the tendency of the

centripetal. He is the hub that holds together in himself the divided spokes.[2]

The unity and coöperation of Christendom are conditioned on where we place the emphasis, on a creed or on the Christ.

IV

The distinguishing mark of the religion of Jesus is its simplicity and clearness. The religion about Jesus is characterized by obscurities and metaphysical abstractions which only the keenest minds can understand or profess to understand. The religion of Jesus is readily understood by a little child.

A little Hindu girl caught the meaning of what a real Christian is when she gave the definition of a Christian: "One who is different from others."

When Bishop Enoch M. Marvin left a home one day, a little child inquired, "Mother, was that Jesus?"

You may take the simplest minded, the most uncultured, and even those who are subnormal in intelligence, and they know the difference between Christian and unchristian conduct, when they would be unable to give or to understand the definition of any Christian doctrine.

It goes without saying that one cannot have an adequate conception of the Christian spirit, the religion of Jesus, without beholding him as he stands

[2]"The Christ of the Indian Road." By E. Stanley Jones. Copyright 1925. Used by permission of the Abingdon Press.

out in distinct outline in the four Gospels. While the reader of the Gospels will encounter many difficulties which he cannot solve and no one else has solved for him, yet he will have no difficulty in understanding the spirit, disposition, and temperament of Jesus.

He finds a person with no trace of pride, selfishness, avarice, personal ambition, envy, malice, impurity, class prejudice, racial enmity, or cruelty toward or contempt for any human being. The positive qualities of love, humility, self-sacrifice, and service stand out with undimmed clearness. Some things we cannot know, but we may know the mind of Jesus, and the mind which should be in us.

We may continue to hold in controversy the incidental and differentiating features of theological notions. We shall possibly continue to disagree concerning the mode of baptism and the theory of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper and the method of administering this sacrament.

We shall continue a verbal warfare over certain metaphysical abstractions connected with our theology. We shall continue to differ over the forms of Church government. But the primary and fundamental matters are beyond disputation.

Whatever may be our failure in conduct, and despite the sophistry with which we may attempt to blind the eyes of the soul, we feel our inescapable obligation to the clear certainties of the Christian

faith. We know that we should love our enemies. We know that we should help the ignorant and the weak and the helpless and the homeless. We know that the liberal soul is better than the selfish churl. We know that love is better than hate. We know that the truth is better than a lie. We know that the Golden Rule is better than the rule of gold. We know that the way of Christ is better than the way of the world.

These are the serious tests of Christianity, and there is no element of uncertainty about them.

On the other hand, think of the turgid phraseology which theologians have employed in discussing the doctrines of Christianity.

Jesus with his disciples instituted a simple memorial service in remembrance of his death and passion.

The theologians have obscured the meaning of this sacrament with great swelling words which the people do not understand; such as, transubstantiation, consubstantiation, subpanation, and impanation.

In the early conflict in the Church between Athanasius and Arius concerning the person of Jesus, the followers of Athanasius were homoousians, which means "of the same substance with the Father," and the followers of Arius were homoousians, which means "of like substance with the Father."

One can but wonder how much a church audience from a mill population received from the message

of the preacher who began by saying: "My friends, justification is a forensic term."

The proverbial dryness of what is called a doctrinal sermon results from the abundance of obscure and technical terms.

The chief difficulty of the religion about Jesus is the difficulty of understanding it. The chief difficulty of the religion of Jesus is the difficulty of living it. To understand even in a measure the religion about Jesus, we need a dictionary. To live the religion of Jesus calls for a high type of courage and heroism.

It is easy to bring to Christ our rhapsodies of praise. It is easy to contend for some doctrine about him and belabor our theological opponents with ugly epithets.

It is easy to exalt our own particular Church as being superior to all others. But in this day in which we are living, with its abiding paganism, with the selfishness which modern wealth intensifies, with the hatreds which modern conditions and conflicts have inflamed, it calls for the heroism of the cross of Christ to live the life of Christ.

"Our fathers to their graves have gone,
Their strife is past, their triumph won;
But sterner trials wait the race
That rises in their honored place,
The moral warfare with the crime
And folly of an evil time.

So let it be, in God's own might
We gird us for the coming fight,
And strong in him whose strength is ours,
In conflict with unholy powers,
We grasp the weapons he has given,
The light and truth and love of heaven."

CHAPTER XXV

THE HERESY OF THE ORTHODOX

I

The Church has placed much emphasis on orthodoxy, and so little emphasis on orthopraxy, that we scarcely know what the word means.

Its unfamiliar sound, as compared with orthodoxy, illustrates the misplaced emphasis of the Church.

It would seem that the most zealous advocates of orthodoxy would admit that right practice is at least as important as right opinion. The rebuke which Tolstoi gives the Church for the lopsidedness of her emphasis is altogether justifiable.

We doubtless disagree with Tolstoi in his interpretation of the doctrine of nonresistance with all of its applications and implications, but we have no right to disagree with the main proposition that the teachings of Jesus are intended for application to all our multiplied relationships in this world.

Tolstoi has been generally regarded as a brilliant but visionary idealist. But so far as some of his main contentions are concerned, he holds to the sane practicable idea that the principles of Jesus Christ are for practice in this present world.

Tolstoi says in his "My Confession—My Religion": "I tried to imagine the result, if instead

of the national hatred with which we are inspired under the name of the 'love for the fatherland,' if in place of those laudations of murder which we call war which from earliest childhood has been held up to us as the most brilliant achievement of men, we were taught on the contrary horror and contempt for all the means—military, diplomatic, and political —which serve to divide men."

Tolstoi gives this description of those who deny the practicability of the teachings of Jesus:

> I heard everywhere with regard to the impossibility of practicing Christ's teaching: it is admissible and would give true happiness to men, but men cannot obey it. The objection that Christ's teaching is excellent but impracticable comes not only from believers, but from skeptics, from those who do not believe in the dogmas of the fall of man and the redemption.

In brief, the faith of Tolstoi is thus expressed: "The faith that triumphs over the world is faith in Christ's teaching."

We are hardly half-Christianized, despite our professed orthodoxy, so long as we disbelieve in the practicability of the teachings of Jesus.

II

It is true that conventional orthodoxy believes much that is not so, but my main criticism of a large element of the professedly orthodox is not that they believe too much, but that they do not believe enough. They are content with the ancient creeds and do not believe that God is revealing new phases of his truth to our own generation.

They are skeptical of the power and practicability of the gospel of Christ in this present world. They are so skeptical of the power of spiritual agencies that they have no hope for the world aside from the intervention of physical might on the part of Jesus as a kind of super-Kaiser.

They swallow with one gulp the literalness of the account of the whale swallowing Jonah, but they have all the skepticism of Jonah concerning the power of the gospel to win the world.

They accept literally the fall of Jericho as the result of the blast of rams' horns, but they do not believe in the power of the gospel to-day to shake down the intrenched forces of evil.

They hold to a faith in the incarnation and atonement, but the mistake is that these tremendous spiritual forces with the motive power belonging to them are not considered sufficient to make a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.

A spiritual reservoir of power sufficient to transform the world and make real on our earth human brotherhood is sluiced into narrow channels and a Niagara of power is used to turn ecclesiastical flutter mills. There is spiritual power enough in the incarnate life and atoning death of Jesus Christ, his revelation of divine Fatherhood and human brotherhood, forever to put a stop to the stupid criminality of war, the destructiveness of intemperance, the growing divorce evil and social impurity, and the oppression of the weak. In the face

of this high possibility, heated controversialists are endeavoring to bolster up discredited traditions, wrangling over the theory of verbal inspiration, becoming excited in their defense of the inerrancy of some minor historical event, and desperately trying to prove that some ancient and obscure prophecy will be literally fulfilled.

The saving grace which flows from the atoning death of the incarnate Christ is turned into a magical safety device whereby the believer receives a guarantee of safety for the next world. Theology still carries remnants of antinomianism which frees the believer from the necessity of obedience to the ideals of Jesus for this life. Through faith the power of God makes the life safe, but does not save the life, whereas the power of God is to be made manifest in enabling the life to harmonize itself with the commandments of God.

The power of the gospel is not simply to help people out of the world, but to help them in the world. The power of God was not exhausted by ancient achievements. The heresy of orthodoxy consists in the fact that while no question is raised that God delivered the ancient Israelites from Egyptian oppression, there is no hope held out to the vast population who are to-day the victims of industrial oppression. The advocates of the deliverance of people from injustice to-day are reminded that they should stick to the simple gospel, which is a gospel of strict individualism; a

gospel so simple that it scarcely satisfies the minds of any except simpletons. This orthodoxy is the worst heresy, because it is the heresy of a half-truth. My controversy with reactionary theologians is not because of their orthodoxy, but because of their insufficient and incomplete orthodoxy.

The orthodoxy we need is an orthodoxy which lays emphatic stress on the applicability of the words and teachings of the divine Son of God to all the complex and intricate network of modern relationships in life, which alone can save us from a hell on earth. We are less than half-orthodox, if we hold solely to the ancient creeds. We need to incorporate into our faith the best and truest interpretation of Christian truth which is given by our own age. We are not to despise the old, neither are we to despise the new. We must fully Christianize the ancient creeds. We must give a whole-hearted recognition, not only to the finality, but to the practicability of the words of Jesus. The most perilous heresy of to-day is medieval-minded orthodoxy, the heresy of the orthodox.

There are only two clear-cut theories of the world: the materialistic and the spiritual. The heresy of our terribly orthodox friends is that, despite their professed orthodoxy, they hold with the materialists that while the ideals of Jesus are high and beautiful, they are not workable in this world.

According to the materialist the application of

the ethics of Jesus to the relationships of life is absurd and impossible, and the heresy of the orthodox is in their agreement with the materialists.

The materialistic philosophers hold that selfishness, brutality, lust, bloodthirstiness, industrial oppression, and war are natural and inevitable in the world, and the Fundamentalists agree with them. Thus the extremes meet.

There is a curious contrast between some men who are not regarded as Christian and some churchmen who boast of their orthodoxy as touching the practicability of the teachings of Jesus.

Voltaire wrote: "War is the greatest of all crimes, and yet there is no aggressor who does not color his crime with the pretext of justice."

Kant wrote: "Our rulers have no money to spend on public education because all their resources are already placed to the account of the next war. . . . This is done by nations who make a great ado about their piety, and who, while drinking up iniquity like water, would have themselves regarded as the very elect of the orthodox faith."

Herbert Spencer expressed himself on war as follows: "Now war is merely wholesale cannibalism; and there is no reason why it should not be classed with cannibalism and unequivocally denounced. The sentiments and ideas of justice can grow only as fast as the external antagonisms of societies de-

crease and the external harmonious coöperations of their members increase."

Compare this orthodoxy of the heretics with the heresy of the terribly orthodox.

In a magazine, *The King's Business*, whose editorial contributors consist of Drs. J. Frank Norris, I. M. Haldeman, W. B. Riley, and others who are supposed to be valiant defenders of orthodoxy, we find this startling declaration: "What are our officials, who are supposed to defend our nation, doing? Who will take this matter to heart? When will our citizens understand that this cry of 'Peace, peace,' is a blow at the very life of America, a peril to every loyal public institution, every loyal private institution, and worst of all a stroke at the Scriptures themselves."

However, these gentle saints, these ultra-orthodox, can find agreement to their heresy among some of the unorthodox.

It was Christianity's doctrine of peace which led Nietzsche to say: "I regard Christianity as the most fatal and seductive lie that has ever existed. . . . Ye shall love peace as a means to new wars and the short peace better than the long."

Marshall von Moltke wrote: "Perpetual peace is a dream and not even a beautiful dream. War is an element of the order of the world established by God. The most noble virtues of men are developed in it. Without war the world would stagnate and lose itself in materialism."

And there is a long list of advocates of war, some of whom are atheists, some militarists, and some of whom are both militarists and atheists.

It must be very comforting to a large number of so-called orthodox brethren to be affiliated with Nietzsche and company. However, Nietzsche and Treitschke and Bernhardi are more consistent, since atheism is not incompatible with war.

But to those who believe in God and war, I am led to say what Wesley said to a controversialist in his day, "Your God is my devil."

If I believed that God favored war, then I would be against God.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE HERESY OF THE ORTHODOX (CONTINUED)

I

A PERVERTED orthodoxy values traditions more than truths and precedents more than principles.

It makes a fetish of the sayings of the great leaders of the past, whenever these sayings can be twisted into a policy of reactionism. Against the League of Nations and World Court, the warning of Washington against "entangling alliances" is regarded as a sufficient argument.

In the first place, Washington had no prophetic forecast that enabled him to apply the words to the necessities of the present world situation. In the second place, if he had so intended, we would not be required to believe in his infallibility. Why not quote the words of Washington, "My first wish is to see this plague of mankind, war, banished from the earth"?

The stubborn opposition to a League of Nations has drawn its strength not only from an appeal to past precedent, but also from the sordid politics of the present.

When it was made a political issue, prominent Republicans who had been favorably disposed

toward the League were coerced into line against it.

The League of Nations has already proved itself necessary to the world's progress and peace, with a membership consisting of almost all the nations of the earth, even eighteen South American nationalities, while the United States pursues a policy of proud and selfish isolation. A few years ago our country was the most loved nation of the world and now it is the most despised.

In 1924 Mr. Coolidge in a public speech recounted the charities of the United States, and said in effect that this was our best way of serving the world; and he took occasion to throw out a word of warning against dangerous alliances, referring to the League as a dead issue. One can but wish that, in place of this declaration, Mr. Coolidge had retained his proverbial silence. Politicians have urged in opposition to the League of Nations that it imperiled our Monroe Doctrine, whereas the main difficulty with our politicians is that they do not so much as know what the Monroe Doctrine means.

By a strange sophistry we have come to construe the original objection against European powers meddling with the free States of South America into the right of our country to meddle with the internal affairs of these nations.

The United States is endangering the peace of the world by her undue activity in the affairs of the

South American nations and by her unreasonable aloofness from the other nations of the world.

Desperate efforts have been made to find a substitute for a League of Nations. There is the proposed plan of the outlawry of war. A noted Englishman, Mr. F. W. Norwood, who made a world tour in behalf of world peace, gives a sympathetic appreciation of Senator Borah's proposal to outlaw war, and at the same time lays bare its defect.

So far as I may speak for others, as I certainly speak for myself, the outlawry of war is the only rational objective. But the question is, Which comes first, "the judicial substitute for war" or "war outlawed"? When private killing was the custom in Texas or Arizona, which came first, a solemn pronouncement that the killer was an outlaw or the establishment of strong and authoritative law? The importance of judicial machinery cannot be overestimated. Of no avail is a desire for peace without the means of putting it into effect. Personal disputes were settled by sword or pistol until courts were established to which disputants could appeal with a fair prospect of securing justice. International disputes will be settled by guns and gas until some world court is evolved to which, even under circumstances which seem to involve national "honor," nations will be willing to submit their case, in the conviction that their most vital interests will be fully safeguarded.

II

There is the obligation of the United States in the crusade for peace.

A United States Senator whose aspirations looked toward the presidential chair said some months ago in Carnegie Hall: "Let the people of this country attend strictly to their own business and let Europe

stew in her own juice." But when Europe stews in her own juice we will be stewing some likewise.

A narrow and selfish nationalism is very far from true Americanism. A man is something less than a hundred per cent American, and something less than a hundred per cent Christian, and something less than a hundred per cent man, but full one hundred per cent of blind stupidity, who holds to a doctrine of national isolation and separation from world problems in this day of world solidarity and inevitable international relationship.

The United States is best prepared on account of wealth and position for leadership in strengthening the international ties of friendship and good will.

The French Ambassador said to Mr. George Wickersham, a prominent Republican leader: "I envy your position. You are secure on the north and on the south; and on the east and west—your only neighbors are fish."

Secretary Hughes, after studying what premiers, parliaments, bankers, and editors are doing and saying, declared: "So far as we can see into the future, the United States is not in the slightest danger of aggression. In no single power and in no possible combination of powers lies any menace to our security."

Why encourage feverish militarism and vast expenditures? Are we afraid of an attack from the

bankrupt nations of Europe? Do we fear China and Japan, which are far weaker than we are?

Are we afraid of the mixture of oil and holy water in Mexico? The answer to our question may be found in the fact that we are called upon to protect our financiers with over thirty billion dollars invested in foreign countries.

Commercialism is as cruel as militarism. Behind our militarism is commercialism. The militarists, who hold that the only solution of national difficulties is a resort to the cruelty of brute force, lend support to the Brahmanistic doctrine of soul transmigration, and this is a strong indication that some savage ancestors have had a rebirth in them.

The United States can pursue a course that will inevitably arouse the suspicion and intensify the military mania of other nations, which in turn will further increase our own war spirit; or from our vantage point of power and influence we can take the course of encouraging peace and good will and set the pace which will lead the other nations out of a military system.

III

There is the imperative urgency of international agreement for the preservation of peace in the two considerations of the new world consciousness and the new individual conscience.

1. *There is the new world consciousness.* The oneness of humanity, which has been held theoreti-

cally, is now a practical actuality. All parts of the world are so interlocked by means of communication, methods of transportation, commercial interests, and exchange of intellectual ideas as to make possible the international mind. Our interests are identical, so that no nation can fight another nation without fighting itself.

The increasing knowledge which the common people of each nation are gaining of the people of every nation increases a sympathetic attitude which will make it increasingly difficult for muddle-headed rulers to lead them to slay each other.

2. *The new individual conscience must be recognized.* The intelligent conscience of to-day feels as never before the absolute stupidity and hideous crimes of war. The conscientious objectors to war have largely increased and they refuse to be coerced into a cruel conformity which means wholesale murder, whatever may be the dictates of blundering governmental leaders. They say in effect to the official representatives of government, "Settle your differences like human beings and not like a bunch of dogs, tigers, or savages."

We have long passed the superstition, "The king can do no wrong," and we are now moving away from the superstition, "My country can do no wrong," and the apostolic challenge is being rung out, "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto men more than unto God, judge ye; but we must obey God."

Even Carlyle in his day saw the ghastly brutality of the war system.

> Thirty stand fronting thirty, each with a gun in his hand; straightway the word "fire" is given and they blow the souls out of one another; and in the place of sixty brisk, useful craftsmen the world has sixty dead carcasses which it must bury and shed tears for. Had these men any quarrel? Busy as the devil is not the smallest. How then? Simpletons. Their governors had fallen out; and instead of shooting one another, had the cunning to make these poor blockheads shoot.

The assumption is made by the advocates of militarism that when the government declares war all individual convictions must be submerged. The militarists who are so fond of looking into the past would do well to look into the past at this point and learn some lessons. We speak of the new individual conscience, but it is in reality only a renewal of emphasis on liberty of conscience.

More than twenty centuries ago Socrates died a martyr in behalf of the right of the individual conscience. A foundation stone of our own republic is liberty of conscience. Twenty-six of our State Constitutions declare in substance that it is the privilege of "every man to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience." Nineteen declare that "no human authority ought to control or interfere with the rights of conscience."

Attorney General Stone, while Dean of the Columbia Law School, with Judge Julian Mack, of Chicago, made an official investigation of "conscientious objectors" for the Wilson administra-

tion during the war. In a remarkable article on the subject of dealing with conscientious objectors, he says:

> Both sound morals and sound policy require that the State should not violate the conscience of the individual. All our history gives confirmation of the view that liberty of conscience has a moral and social value which makes it worthy of preservation at the hands of the State. . . . When one realizes the seriousness of their purpose and the power of their influence he can have no illusion that the mere application of force to conscientious objectors will bring any real solution of the problem. Most of them, at least of the religious objectors, were neither physical nor moral cowards.

There is no analogy between the right of the Christian conscience against war and those who contend for "personal liberty" as against the Eighteenth Amendment. The liquor advocates contend for their individual right in support of the liquor traffic which destroys life. The peace advocates contend for their individual conscience in support of peace which saves life. The one is Christian liberty, the other is unchristian license.

Peace is a Christian ideal. Intemperance is an unchristian practice.

We know that Pitt was right in his opposition to the war with the American colonies and that the mass psychology of his country was wrong.

We know that Bright was right in his opposition to the Crimean war and that the misguided populace was wrong. We believe that Lloyd George and Ramsey Macdonald were right in opposing the

Boer war and that their country was wrong. We believe that Abraham Lincoln and General Grant were right in condemning the Mexican war and that our government was wrong. We believe that President McKinley was right in his first position against the war with Spain and that the Western Republican Senators who were guided by the motive of their own political safety were wrong. We believe that the Christian conscience of America was right in its declaration against war with Mexico and that Fall, who was Secretary of the Interior, and Daugherty and Doheny and Sinclair and the yellow press who wanted to fight Mexico were wrong.

We believe that in any future issue those who would submit any difficulty to arbitration, a League of Nations, or World Court, would be right, and that the jingoistic patriots who would advise violent methods would be wrong.

Against all the ranting of militarism, I deliberately take my stand with the truly heroic spirits of the past who by a constant invasion of the dominion of physical force have made all progress possible. I take my stand with Martin Luther in his courageous words that launched the Protestant Reformation: "It is unsafe and injurious to go against one's conscience."

CHAPTER XXVII

THE HERESY OF THE ORTHODOX (CONCLUDED)

IV

THERE is the defense of war.

1. *There is in the first place the practical defense of war.* The various groups who receive profit from militarism are eloquent advocates of war.

Those whose livelihood is involved in war may be expected to create a war scare. The munition makers are very fervent in their patriotism. They are prophets of the certainty of wars for the future because they desire that their future profits shall be certain. If war to these "patriotic" citizens meant financial loss or loss of life by a gas attack, they would become so pink in their pacifism that Tolstoi would look like a rampant militarist.

They have a superabundance of proxy patriotism. They are more than willing to furnish the guns and receive the gains. Their militarism, after all, is mammonism. Their patriotism is located in the purse. They have no interest in the cultivation of peace so long as it interferes with their vested interests. The jingo politician finds his opportunity in appealing to the provincialism, partisanship, and baser prejudices of the people. His politics and

official position and patriotism all blend into one. He advocates the urgency of military preparation provided it means a preparation for his political position. He keeps one ear to the ground and both eyes on the main chance. The yellow newspapers see red. What if the rest of the world should combine against us and we should not be ready? The yellow newspapers see the peril of the yellow races, whereas our greatest peril is the yellow metal of commercial exploiters.

2. *There is the theoretical defense of war.* (1) There is first the theoretical defense of war from the viewpoint of the State.

There is the false argument that fighting armies are analogous to a police force.

A police force is in opposition to a man or group of men who disobey law. In war it is not a question of superior nations suppressing the acts of violence of a criminal nation, but the superior nations fight among themselves. There could be no similarity to a police force unless there were an international alliance and a combined military force of the nations arrested the aggressive movements of a criminal nation.

The comparison between the present war-system and a police force is an absurdity. Any man whose head is not filled with wet sawdust and who uses his head for anything except a hatrack should know better than that. The analogy could only be correct if policemen engaged in a free-for-all fight

among themselves, and for good measure killed thousands of innocent bystanders.

Favorite watchwords are "preparedness" and "self-defense," and it goes without saying that in the absence of international understanding, the old method of preparedness will be continued. But there is the fallacy of the whole theory of preparedness. To be prepared, the United States would have to have greater military strength not only than Germany, France, or England, but greater than all possible combinations. Any nation to be prepared would have to be stronger than all possible combinations, which reduces it to an absurdity. The race of preparedness is the race of death. The only real preparedness must result from international relationships so that the nation is strong with the strength of the entire group. I am an advocate of this kind of preparedness, and it is the only preparedness which will prevent war.

In the early stage of society the only self-defense of the individual was his individual ability to fight; but I much prefer that self-defense which the courts and law throw about me. So it must be with nations.

Reactionaries suppose that everything has to continue as it has in the past. I wonder that some people do not break their necks looking back on the past. It is not a mere idiosyncrasy—I like to use a shorter word when it will do as well or better: it is idiocy. There are those who are always look-

ing back on the past, but who never learn any wisdom from the past. They are like the old negro who said, "My mind kinder comes and goes"—only their minds mostly go. A poor shell-shocked soldier replied to an inquiry by saying, "I am getting on very well: I sleep and eat and feel all right; I don't have any mind, but I don't seem to miss it."

There are a number of controversialists to-day who do not use their mind and who do not seem to miss it.

(2) There is the theoretical defense mainly from the viewpoint of the Church.

The heresy of the orthodox is nowhere more manifest than in their advocacy of war.

The defender of war imagines that he has scored a tremendous argument when he says, "Righteousness must come before peace." He has simply started his mouth going and left it without any supervision. His falseness is not in his words, but in the application and meaning which he gives to them. When did it come to pass that righteousness must be established by the unrighteousness of war? This assumes that war makes righteousness. War is the force of might, and might never makes right. This is to continue in the present day to hold to the philosophy of "tooth and fang and claw."

What is our situation to-day? Lloyd George has said in effect that our danger was that as we were removed farther from the awful horror of the late war we would begin to tone down its hideous

guilt. We have now begun to trifle with the most tremendous tragedy of all time. We have military leaders who would make compulsory in our schools and colleges a system of militarism for which we gave Germany the most severe condemnation in 1914. A college president says: "The battle for war is being fought to-day in our schools and colleges. The War Department through government appropriations has millions of dollars at its disposal to build the war spirit in the minds of our youth."

Dr. S. P. Cadman, President of the Federal Council of Churches, in an address in Brooklyn, which was interrupted by some reserve officers, said:

> In brief, take the War Department out of the public schools of the United States and keep it out. It is unwise and in the real sense unpatriotic to introduce in these schools the very things we denounced so bitterly in our adversaries in the late war. Making military training compulsory by college edicts, refusing academic degrees to students on any other ground than academic unfitness, and creating the vicious atmosphere of vilification around those students who refuse military training as coward and poltroon is about as un-American a procedure as I know. It is entirely adverse to the spirit and the principles of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence. We have refused compulsory training for ourselves; why should it be forced on our sons as part of the price of their education?

The warfare of the future, which demands far more courage than military warfare, is the war against war. To oppose the selfish interests which sponsor the war system is to encounter an opposi-

tion as fierce as that which brought Jesus to the cross.

Before the coming of Christ an angel announced his incarnation and another angel announced the program of the incarnate Christ as peace on earth. It is a curious spectacle of orthodoxy which believes the message of the first angel and practically scoffs at the message of the second angel. It is passing strange that we have preachers even who are in accord with the United States Senator who cries: "Your miracle of peace on earth is impossible. I will not believe it."

A man may swallow in totality every word of the Apostles' Creed, the Westminster Confession of Faith, and the Methodist Articles of Religion, but if he is a stand-pat militarist he is an outbroken and dangerous heretic.

Between the position of Dr. S. P. Cadman in his denunciation of war and the position of Dr. John Roach Straton with his notion that there can be no peace on earth until Jesus sets up his physical kingdom, any man who has not an incurable softening of the theological brain can but choose the former position.

The recent protest against compulsory military training in various colleges throughout the country, the action taken against it by the twenty-eight religious denominations, and a similar action by the college youth recently gathered in convention,

all combine to emphasize the fact that compulsion in this matter is becoming an acute issue.

I am most concerned over the flagrant break of the Church institutions with their own highest traditions.

What has come over the spirit of our dreams when Church institutions in one sentence set forth a glittering, toothless generality about orthodoxy, and in the next sentence make a declaration in favor of compulsory military training? If this be orthodoxy, then the less we have the better.

I do not propose to be a heretic of any kind, but if I were compelled to choose some form of heresy I would choose a form concerning some abstruse metaphysical doctrine of the nature of deity which nobody understands, rather than a heresy which denies and ignores the manifest spirit and love and purpose of Jesus Christ. I am unable to harmonize myself with the ecclesiastical type of mind which in one breath makes a declaration of orthodoxy in words perfectly true and perfectly harmless and in another breath, when a real vital issue is involved, declares in favor of a Prussian militarism of the old régime.

Shall we as churchmen in one breath proclaim loyalty to doctrinal traditions and in the next breath break with the best traditions of our institutions by thrusting upon our own sons that which we were unwilling to bear?

The Church institutions should serve notice on

the War Department that Christian colleges can not be bought with a few pieces of silver.

I am confident we would make much better progress if it were not for some preachers. The reactionary forces are always able to enlist the support of certain preachers of the priestly and static type. These sinister forces say in effect to the preacher, "You already have a cinch on your heavenly reward and we will see to it that your earthly reward is secure." A former Moderator whose name is well known, "The tall pine of the Sierras," excused himself from attending the chaplains' training camp with the permission of the War Department that he might remain in his pulpit and preach against "these seditious pacifists." The motto of this militaristic preacher is, "Teach the boys to shoot." "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he shall have his reward," even if the munition makers have to reward him.

It may be supposed that his choir caught the spirit of his devotion and sang:

> "Hark! the herald angels pass,
> Dropping bombs and poisonous gas."

This preacher's orthodoxy leads him to assume that war is a permanent institution and must be because it has been. He idolizes the past, but learns nothing from his idol.

Lowell says, "Every man is the prisoner of his own date." We are very prone to be molded by the

group mind of our day. The preceding standpatters said in their day that piracy, dueling, slavery, polygamy, and the liquor traffic were permanent institutions.

3. *There is the sentimental defense of war.* This results from a sentimental regard for past usages and customs. It is illustrated by the old story of the man who was defending capital punishment and said, "Capital punishment was good enough for my ancestors and it is good enough for me."

We have so-called patriotic organizations which proceed on the supposition that we honor the fathers as we continue their methods and customs. If our fathers engaged in the slaughter of war, who are we that we should condemn this time-honored destruction of human lives?

We might naturally suppose that women with the mother-heart would without exception oppose war. But there are women in organizations whose thinking is conformed to the false sentimentalism of the group in its attitude toward the past. So we have the strange spectacle of militaristic mothers who idealize and glorify warfare because their ancestors were warriors. I refuse to accept either the sentiment or logic of these clamorously patriotic sisters. Because the great-great-great-grandfathers of these women were possibly captains in the Revolutionary War and their fathers were possibly colonels in the Civil War is no convincing argument

to me that my sons and grandsons should be slaughtered in future wars.

Because these women can find the record that their ancestors were slain on the battle field does not make me willing that my descendants should be slain in a similar manner.

At the risk of offending these militaristic sisters, I will persistently resist such a perversion of patriotism.

V

There is an arraignment of war in our day more pronounced without question than ever before.

1. *There is to be considered the destructiveness of war.* There is first the destruction of property, the material waste.

According to the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace the total financical cost of the World War was above $337,000,000,000.

If we paid $450,000 a day from the birth of Jesus Christ until 2000 A.D. toward the cost of the war, the amount would not be covered.

There is in the second place the more tragical destruction of human life.

There were 10,000,000 soldiers killed and 3,000,000 missing, while 13,000,000 civilians were killed; in addition there have died since the war, as a result of the war, 14,000,000—making a total of 40,000,000. There were 20,000,000 wounded, 9,000,000 war orphans, 5,000,000 war widows, and 10,000,000 refugees.

Since the close of the World War scientific methods of destructiveness have been immensely increased.

It is nothing short of stupidity to allow ourselves to drift toward another war. With increased methods of destructiveness in poison gas and death germs, whole cities could be destroyed in a few hours. It means race suicide. There would not be enough people left to hold memorial exercises.

Lewisite gas, which was not used in the late war, is said to kill instantly and to possess fifty-five times the spread of any poisonous gas used in the war.

The size of demolition bombs is steadily growing. During the recent war 400-pound bombs were considered highly effective, while now 4,000-pound bombs are available. In the realm of poison gas, great progress is also being made. In this connection D. B. Bradner, Chief of the Chemical Research and Development Section of the United States Chemical Warfare Service, said: "The Chemical Warfare Service has discovered a liquid approximately three drops of which, when applied to any part of the skin, will cause a man's death. One plane carrying two tons of the liquid could cover an area 100 feet wide by seven miles long in one trip and could deposit material to kill every man in that area by action on his skin." Deadly disease germs are also available. A few well-placed bombs filled with these germs could poison the water supply of whole areas. With comparative ease, whole

sections of a population could be infected with virulent diseases.

Thomas A. Edison was recently asked, "Is it true that practically the entire population of London could be killed by gas within twelve hours?" "It is not true," he replied; "the thing could be done *within three hours.*"

2. *The second feature of our arraignment is that war settles no difficulties that could not be better settled by reason and arbitration.* It is preposterous to suppose in this day of enlightenment that while individual differences are better settled at the tribunal of reason and justice than by fisticuff and violence, yet national differences can only be adjusted by an appeal to brute violence.

There is the fallacy that war rightly settles differences and results in progress.

Napoleon said: "I doubt if war ever really settled anything. It unsettles everything. . . . The more I study the world, the more I am convinced of the inability of brute force to create anything durable."

3. *The third item in the arraignment of war is that it is anti-Christian.* The war on war is now under way. Those who imply that the opponents of war are lacking in courage should make a study of the heroism of the early Church.

The heralds of the new heroism must call the Church back from her apostasy to the old heroism of the early Christians.

The primitive Christians renounced war. All who bore the sword of Rome were excluded from the number of catechumens, and those who voluntarily became soldiers were excommunicated.

We call upon our traditionalists to become sure-enough traditionalists and not to stop with medievalism, but go back to the primitive Church.

The trouble with some of our conservative brethren is that they do not go back far enough. This is the trouble with some who pride themselves on their orthodoxy. Their orthodoxy is medieval orthodoxy. It is evident that in reality the conservatives are those who conserve the high values of pure and primitive Christianity.

Irenæus writes: "Christians have changed their swords and lances into instruments of peace."

Later the bishops and popes became militarists.

Harnack says: "The early Christian Church was the first peace society."

Justin Martyr as early as 140 A.D. held that the spirit of war and the spirit of Jesus were absolutely irreconcilable. Origen in 230 A.D. defied imperial conscription. Cyprian in the third century maintained that war was wholesale murder.

The Council at Nicæa, 325 A.D., denounced war. Here is the stronghold of orthodoxy. The orthodox brethren should adjust themselves.

However, Constantine made the cross an imperial military emblem, and with him began the long

apostasy and heresy of the Church which has continued until the present.

The historian Lecky wrote:

> Christianity had been at first the extreme negative of militarism. When the cross was carried in the forefront of the Roman armies it was evident that a great change was passing over the peaceful spirit of Christianity. The stigma which Christianity had attached to war was gradually effaced. The transition to the essentially military Christianity of the Crusaders was both the terror and example of the Mohammedans.

Whatever may be said by way of extenuation of the practical necessity of war in other stages of our civilization, the time has come for Christians again to become Christians, and for the Church to become again the Church of Jesus Christ.

There must be the creating of a new conscience concerning war or the bringing back of the lost conscience of the Church.

This may appear to some to be extreme; but there is no question that if the Church should take this high position, the State would suddenly see a new light and find a reasonable and Christian way of settling difficulties rather than appeal to brute force.

War is anti-Christian because it cheapens human life. Governments that authorize wholesale killing create a disregard for human life that multiplies murders in time of peace.

War is anti-Christian because it is productive of hate and deceit and lowers all ethical standards.

In war, lying becomes an art, a skilled profession. We confess now that we were grossly deceived in the late war.

Sir Philip Gibbs was man enough to come out with his recantation in "Now It Can Be Told," and in numerous articles, with an apology for his part in the campaign of deceit and suppression. Mr. George Creel and the Committee on Public Information, who flooded America with seventy-five million books and pamphlets, say, "There was no medium of appeal that we did not employ."

Lord Robert Cecil said not long after the close of the World War: "If the situation had been known to the world, no nation could have forced its people to fight."

There is no possibility of harmonizing war and real Christianity.

We are to understand that the Bible is a progressive revelation reaching its culmination in Jesus Christ. We must abide by the higher revelation of the New Testament.

There are some preachers even who make no distinction between the Old and New Testaments. There are portions of the Old Testament which countenance war and there are also portions which justify polygamy and slavery. Why hold the Old Testament as authority in the matter of war and not as authority on these discarded evils? When a certain type of preachers defends war to-day as being the will of God, I take comfort in the same

sort of objection as the old lady when her preacher made a statement contrary to her opinion and experience and she spoke out in meeting, "Thank the Lord, I know that ain't so."

The advocates of war in their effort to find support in the New Testament fall into absurdities similar to the liquor advocates. They are fond of quoting: "I come not to send peace, but a sword." They conveniently omit the context, "For I am come to set a son at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law."

The clear idea of Jesus is that his truth creates issues in which members of the same family even are opposed to each other as regards their attitude toward him. "A text without the context is a pretext."

It is nothing short of blasphemy to attempt to pervert the words or spirit of Jesus Christ into a defense of war.

War is unchristian. It opposes everything for which Jesus lived and died.

War is in contradiction to the vital and central elements of the Christian faith.

War is out of harmony with divine Fatherhood and human brotherhood, and Christ's valuation of a human life.

War is against the principles of love, the very heart of the Christian gospel, and is against the

expressed mission of Jesus to bind all nations into unity.

War cheapens all human values and can only thrive on hate and falsehood. War advocates worship of a cruel national god.

The Methodist Federation for Social Service is on record in the following words: "We hold that war and the war system constitute the world's chief collective sin. Consequently in our collective capacity as a Church we can give it neither our blessing nor our aid nor permit our organization to be used for its promotion."

To reckon with the results of the World War, with its millions killed, its millions maimed and shell-shocked, and its waste of billions of dollars, and not revolt against it as unchristian in its collossal stupidity and wholesale murder is to advertise one's moral blindness and spiritual insensibility.

VI

Constructiveness must take the place of destructiveness in putting into effect the moral equivalent of war.

One element of the moral equivalent of war is the war against war.

The new heroism must resist the jingoistic patriotism which in reality is an enemy of its own nation as well as other nations.

The heralds of the new heroism will not be disturbed when the air is thick and lurid with resolu-

tions of so-called patriotic organizations. There is a call for courage surpassing all the heroism of bloody battle fields.

You will be charged with cowardice by men who identify courage with brute violence.

You will see your "words twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools."

You will be condemned by an effete orthodoxy which betrays Christ with the kiss of an empty compliment and is guilty of the grossest form of heresy against divine love and human brotherhood.

We are exhorted to "war a good warfare" and we can find a sufficient number of causes to enlist our fighting instincts.

These fighting instincts are not to be suppressed but directed toward the constructive ends of civilization.

The courage of the new heroism of our new day will carry on an unceasing warfare against the intrenched forces of evil and against the selfish greed of vested interests.

This higher warfare will carry on a truceless conflict against crime and ignorance.

If the more than eighty per cent of every dollar which goes into the treasury of the national government to pay for past wars and prepare for future wars were directed to the constructive task of ameliorating the condition of humanity, the gospel of Jesus Christ could be carried to every man who sits in darkness, and opportunity for education

could be given to every child growing up in ignorance, and a chance could be given to every stunted and starved life in our world. All crime and disease-breeding slums would become the veritable gardens of God, and raggedness and wretchedness and a large part of the world's misery would be healed at its fountain source.

"Were half the power that fills the world with terror,
Were half the wealth bestowed on camps and courts,
Given to redeem the human mind from error,
There were no need of arsenals or forts."

The spirit of militarism must be converted to the spirit of service and the battles of the future won by the sword of the Spirit.

We must carry on a warfare for a genuine patriotism that opposes lawlessness, that fights against injustice, against intemperance, against ignorance, superstition, and disease. We must carry on a ceaseless crusade against racial and national hatred. Milton says to Cromwell: "Much remains to conquer still. Peace hath her victories no less renowned than war." It is true that the victories of peace are greater than those of war, and it is for the heralds of a new heroism to win these greater victories.

"Then all men's good shall be each man's rule,
And universal peace lie like a shaft of light across the land."

Almost a century ago Tennyson with prophetic vision caught a glimpse of modern warfare and the peace which was to follow;

"For I dipt into the future, far as human eye could see,
Saw the Vision of the world, and all the wonder that would be; . . .
Heard the heavens fill with shouting, and there rained a ghastly dew
From the nations' airy navies grappling in the central blue; . . .
Till the war-drum throbbed no longer, and the battle-flags were furled
In the Parliament of man, the Federation of the World."

CHAPTER XXVIII

CHRISTIANIZING THE CHRISTIAN CREED

I

In the separation of the Christian from the non-Christian element in our creeds, the Christian consciousness exercises a necessary function as confirmatory of the authority of Jesus. Paulsen has said that the one road to truth is the rationalizing of experience.

The essential teachings of Jesus, such as the Fatherhood of God, the redeeming grace of Jesus Christ, and life eternal, are verified in our own experience and become self-evidencing.

Creeds must also stand the test of reason, especially as it manifests itself to-day in the scientific spirit. We are to accept facts in the spirit of a little child with a freedom from all partisan bias. No longer can we hold to the old conception that "Faith is believing what we know is not so." There is to be no hiding or twisting of the facts. Every difficulty must be fairly faced. We are driven back to the use of reasoning faculties in dealing with the Bible and doctrines.

"Prove all things, hold fast that which is good."

The power which God has given to man for the

reception and recognition of truth is his reason. Bishop Butler wrote: "Reason is the only faculty with which we have to judge anything, even revelation itself."

II

The results that are involved in this transforming method are evident.

1. *There are the negative results which follow.* The scientific conceptions of the universe held by the Biblical writers will be correctly estimated as forming no part of the vital religious revelation.

There will be laid aside the imperfect conception of God, from the earlier anthropomorphic ideas to the idea of the divine sovereignty as set forth by Calvin.

The pre-Christian idea of the advent of the Messiah for a physical reign on earth must follow the way of other Jewish remnants. The popular form of the apocalyptic element is pre-Christian or non-Christian. The distinction between the transient and abiding in the Bible and in Christian creeds must be fearlessly made. The line must be drawn between the primary and what has been termed the secondary in Christianity.

The norm of a Christian creed is not the Roman Catholic Church and papal infallibility, nor the Protestant Church and the theory of Biblical inerrancy, but the primary and fundamental as revealed in Jesus Christ. Primary Christianity is described as "A belief in the personal revelation of God

through Jesus Christ with such religious corollaries thereto as have been shown to be of moral power and in accord with reality."

In Catholic theology there must be ruled out, of course, such doctrines as asceticism, celibacy, worship of the Virgin Mary, penance, priestly absolution, and the mass. The same method must apply to Protestantism in certain theories of Biblical inspiration and revelation, and interpretation of the meaning of the atonement.

Ideas of the atonement are not to be held which are temporary expressions springing out of a particular social or political condition.

(1) There was the ransom theory according to which Christ was given as a ransom to Satan for men. It was a divine stratagem by which Satan was cheated, since he could not hold Jesus. The theory was made possible by the military custom of paying a ransom for captives. This theory prevailed from Irenæus to Gregory the Great.

(2) There was the satisfaction theory of Anselm. In sinning against an infinite Being, man incurs an infinite debt which only a God-man can pay. The theory sprang out of the feudal ideas of the honor which a vassal owes his feudal lord, and the necessity of either satisfaction or punishment for every offense. In the eighteenth century the theory was developed in commercial terms. Man must pay the debt owed to God or some one else must pay it. The merits of Christ were transferred to us.

(3) There is the governmental theory of Grotius, a justice-satisfying theory of the atonement.

Christ suffered as an example to uphold the majesty of the divine law which demanded that punishment be inflicted.

It is not possible for the modern mind to accept that idea of justice. This theory was developed in the political atmosphere of the rise of nations and kings and their government.

(4) There is the moral influence theory of the atonement. The sublime example of Christ's heroic suffering would melt the hard hearts of men. This theory does not accord with the greatness of Christ's personality, since his life was more than the life of a hero and his death was more than the death of a martyr. This conception of the atonement has been held along with the Socinian or Unitarian idea of Jesus.

(5) There is the true idea of the atonement in the light of the fatherly love of God. Suffering is a fact in the life of God. He is the Supreme Sufferer. Only he who can be hurt by our sin can save us by his suffering love. "In all their afflictions he was afflicted." The suffering of the atonement was not substitutionary, but vicarious.

With the revelation through Christ as our standard, it is not so much the falseness as the imperfection of the historic creeds which is corrected. They do not state a positive Christian doctrine which is necessary for our day.

Men have recited all the creeds and yet believed in human slavery, in industrial oppression, in the deep cleavage of caste and class lines, and in the dark butchery of war. We have dealt with philosophical watchwords and with historical statements which have been undermined by science instead of the eternal truths which Jesus preached and for which he lived and died.

2. *There are the positive results which follow the clear and high standard of Christ.* A suggestion has just been made touching the true nature of the atonement, and it is also true that every doctrine must be interpreted in the light of the fatherly love of God as revealed in Jesus Christ.

Repentance, faith, salvation, immortality, human loss, and ruin—all must be understood in the light of this central sun. God is love, and every conception of cruelty is alien to a truly Christian creed. Men are brothers and kindness, not revenge, is the Christian law of life.

The picture of a military Christ trampling on the prostrate and bleeding bodies of his enemies, though held by the ultra orthodox, is not Christian. Only that theology is Christlike which believes that God is like Jesus. Does God need to be placated? What of the doctrine of reconciliation? The New Testament Scriptures always speak of reconciling man to God. The creeds speak of reconciling God to man. God must be a perfectly ethical being, and

all ideas of God punishing the innocent for the guilty must be discarded.

If theology is to be Christian, freedom of thought must be allowed to the Christian. "If the Holy Spirit is to lead the believer into all truth, there must be liberty for such guidance."

It is highly important to make a discrimination between the Christian elements, and the sub-Christian, pre-Christian, non-Christian, and even anti-Christian elements in our creeds.

There are many people who practically accept this distinction, but who vigorously oppose it when it presents itself to them theoretically. The task is not a difficult one, if we are willing to follow a reasonable and Scriptural method of procedure.

III

Jesus Christ is the test, the norm, and the standard in our religious thinking.

It appears that we should be willing to commit ourselves to this principle and abide by all of its necessary implications.

The Bible in its entirety has been assumed to be the standard of the Church and the touchstone of our religious beliefs. But Jesus called men to follow him with the authoritative declaration, "I am the Light of the World."

He expressly repudiated by direct reference, and even more by his life and teaching, certain teachings

of the Old Testament. Taking the Bible in its entirety as a standard has resulted in men defending notorious evils by an appeal to the Scriptures.

When Jesus declared that love must include one's enemies he renounced the old principle of hating one's enemies as anti-Christian. If love of enemies is Christian, then hatred of one's enemies is anti-Christian. By disclaiming the authority of portions of the Bible, you are in harmony with the highest authority, since this very thing was done by Jesus Christ himself.

In the formation of theological systems the Bible has been considered an equal book, and a statement from Leviticus or Chronicles or the Song of Solomon has been considered on an equality with the Sermon on the Mount. Material for creed-building was gathered indiscriminately from every part of the Bible.

The notion of the equal authority of the Scriptures logically rests upon the basis of an equally infallible inspiration in all its parts. Men have asserted: "If I had to give up verbal inspiration, I would have to give up Christ."

This results in the denial of any discrepancies, even in minute historical statements and trivial details that have no remote bearing on the essential truths of a divine revelation. Desperate expedients are resorted to in bringing about a forced agreement in matters that are incidental. It has been said that Ingersoll thought that if he could prove

that David and Moses made mistakes he had proved that Christianity is a mistake.

The skeptics claimed that if they could disprove the inerrancy of the Biblical records they had destroyed the inspiration of the messages. The orthodox accepted the challenge and the extremes met in that both were wrong.

In former days the allegorical method of interpretation obscured the distinctive Christian elements by endeavoring through allegory to elevate all portions of the Old Testament to the level of the New. The distinctive Christian element has been obscured by controversy over the matter of creation by a sudden fiat or a long process; over whether the book of Jonah is literal history or divine truth conveyed by fiction; over whether Moses wrote the Pentateuch, and whether the sun stood still at the command of Joshua, and various other questions which became storm centers.

We are helped in the solution of our difficulties when we frankly recognize two things: First, that there is the human element in the Scriptures with human finiteness and imperfection. The scientific setting of the Scriptures is a human element in harmony with the scientific ideas of that day. Second, that there belongs to the Bible a progressive element. There is the gradual and unfolding revelation which only reaches its culmination in Jesus Christ. There is the imperfection in much of the ethics of the Old Testament. It is a long step

from the imprecatory Psalms, the curse on Babylon, "Happy shall he be who dasheth thy little ones against a stone," to the prayer of Jesus on the cross for his enemies, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."

The failure to recognize the progressiveness of revelation ascribed to God that which was unworthy of him.

Whatever harmonizes with Christ's conception of God is true in theology, and whatever contradicts it is anti-Christian.

Christ has taught us what a Christian truth is and we should be able to recognize it wherever we find it. We can readily discern that the one hundred and third Psalm is Christian and that the one hundred and ninth Psalm does not breathe the spirit of Christ. It is only the Christian element that should enter the Christian creed, and this Christian element is found in many of the lofty utterances of the great prophets of the Old Testament who have a permanent value in Christian thought.

Dr. W. N. Clarke writes:

> As we make Christ the standard, this principle does justice to theology, for it makes theology Christian. It insists that that theology that bears the Christian name shall bear the Christian character. It provides that the full wealth of the Christian revelation shall be poured into theology. It admits to theology all that Christ revealed concerning God. And on the other hand it provides for excluding from theology all incongruous elements, putting the ban upon all that contradicts Jesus or detracts from his testimony. It safeguards the religious character

of theology, for it acknowledges Jesus as teacher in religion and bringer of the supreme religious gift, and it assures his religious gift the precedence in theology over the contributions of metaphysical philosophy, however helpful they may be. So it exalts theology to its rightful place of honor, as the servant of the revealing Christ and the living Saviour God whom he reveals.[1]

[1] "The Christian Doctrine of God." By W. N. Clarke. Scribners.

CHAPTER XXIX

CHRISTIANIZING THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

I

We are not to minimize the importance either of creed or conduct; but, comparatively speaking, I think it should be admitted that there has been a misplaced emphasis on creed.

There is a direct and causal connection between creed and conduct. It is true that men have lived far below their creed, even when the creed has not been high. But in general there is the determinative effect of creed on conduct. For this reason it is important that our creed should be truly Christian, embodying the ideas and ideals which were incarnate in Jesus Christ.

Intelligent laymen are caring less than ever before for small theological questions, such as the mode of baptism or the method of observing the sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

We are inclined to ignore more than before petty squabbles over incidental matters and stress the fundamental fact, "One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren."

The Church has wasted much time on speculative theology, and has insisted on punishment for

heresy of belief and opinion more than heresy of life and morals.

This is a reversal of the Scriptural emphasis, "To obey is better than sacrifice." "Thus saith Jehovah, I hate, I despise your feasts, and I will take no delight in your solemn assemblies."

"What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, mind, soul, and strength; and thy neighbor as thyself." "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."

Jesus alone has fully expressed in human life the perfection of the Christian spirit and the Christian conduct.

Most of us have never seriously tried the Golden Rule or the Sermon on the Mount. We stress our racial distinction and superiority. We stress our class cleavages, we declare our faith in human brotherhood, but we are careful to choose our brothers. We believe that "God has made of one blood all the nations of the earth," but we practically deny the kinship. Our attitude toward the different races of man does not reflect the spirit of Jesus. What sympathies we possess are too local and the sorrows of the wide world do not stir our compassion and help.

If we are to Christianize our conduct, there must

be the positive note, an energetic force for truth and righteousness.

Christian righteousness is spiritual rather than formal. It is not only personal and individual, but social.

It is not separative, as the righteousness of the Pharisees, but permeative.

It is not nationalistic and narrowly patriotic, but universal in the range of its interests.

If we are to Christianize our conduct, we must take a living interest in the living things of the living present.

We are to honor our fathers, reverence the past, and conserve the high values which come to us from the past, but we are not to be held static by the dead hand of the past or fettered by traditionalism.

"Our God is one who never turns his back. We must keep moving on if we would keep company with him. The Christian is to be the salt of the earth; but he is not to become a pillar of salt; he is to remember Lot's wife."

We are to give the supreme place to the vital and essential revelation of Jesus Christ and not be sidetracked in our Christian service by trivial controversies.

In Holland some months ago twelve professors of theology and fifty Churches solemnly condemned as a heretic a minister who expressed a cautious doubt whether the serpent spoken of in

the third chapter of Genesis was a real snake, and was inclined to think the story might be to some extent figurative or allegorical. These Churches believed that a man's fitness for the ministry to-day depended on his attitude toward such a non-religious question. These rabid heresy-hunters were not concerned as to whether the ideals of Christ were losing or winning in the world, but whether a real snake talked to a woman six thousand years ago.

They were concerned more about a trivial matter of traditional interpretation than whether the principles of Christ were being applied to our human life to-day.

It is very much easier to be a Christian in theory than in practice.

I cannot bring myself into any panicky feeling over the organization of "The Society for the Promotion of Atheism." It will only enlist a group of eccentric individuals who can make no appeal to the great heart of humanity. They are comparatively harmless except for the injury which they inflict on themselves. Religious belief is inwrought into the very structure of the normal human personality. That which is most to be feared is a theoretical acknowledgment of Christian truth along with a practical denial.

It is most common to see practical atheism indignantly resenting and resisting theoretical atheism.

Some people are very much concerned for fear their God will be taken from them. But what difference does it make, if they do not conform their lives to the law and love of God? They are disturbed for fear that a theoretical skepticism will deprive them of their Bible. What difference does it make when the Bible is the one book which they do not read, or, if they do read, they continue their narrow, prejudiced, and provincial lives with a persistent selfishness that holds as impracticable in human relationship the spiritual ideals of the Bible? What use have we for a Bible if we do not obey it? Why contend for the letter of the Scriptures when we ignore the spirit of the Scriptures? There are churchmen who become excited because the Church, the custodian of Christian truth, is attacked. Why should they care if the Church is attacked when they lightly violate their own vows of Church membership?

How much worse is theoretical doubt than practical disobedience?

The only faith that is worthy of the name is the faith that obeys the truth. It is the obedience of faith which illumines the soul of man and makes radiant with a divine light the whole personality. One in reality believes only as with a heroic abandon he hazards his life on the truth and God of truth. "Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"

Dr. Halford E. Luccock in "The East Window" writes:

> The denials of the faith which do the largest harm and in which we are most liable to fall are practical rather than intellectual denials. They are the denials of the Christian working principles of life. The heresy most to be feared is not one which may deny one of the five points of Calvinism or one of the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion. Christianity existed for centuries before the Westminster Confession or the Thirty-Nine Articles were drawn up; it will continue long after both have been forgotten. But it cannot survive if its essential spirit ceases to be expressed in human lives. The archheresy is a denial of one of the Beatitudes or one of the two great commandments of Jesus, "Love the Lord thy God . . . and thy neighbor as thyself."[1]

> "No one could tell me what my soul might be.
> I searched for God, and God eluded me.
> I sought my brother out and found all three;
> My Soul, my God, and all humanity."

II

One may possess a belief about Jesus or a religion about Jesus and remain strictly individualistic and unsocial. The person who possesses the religion of Jesus has concern both for the individual and for social conditions and relationships.

There has been a marvelous awakening of the social conscience in our day. We are asking as never before what the mind of Christ is as touching our social problems, and the possibility of a Christian social order.

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[1] "The East Window." By Halford E. Luccock. Copyright 1925. Used by permission of the Abingdon Press.

The Christian conscience is disturbed in the presence of slums and red-light districts. It refuses any longer to accept injustice, poverty, intemperance, and war as necessary evils. We believe that social evils are remediable just as the diseases of cholera and smallpox are. Social conditions may be made favorable to right living.

It is a crime against humanity and the God of humanity that childhood should be stunted and deformed by long hours of labor with scarcely any play.

> "The golf links lie so near the mill,
> That almost every day
> The laboring children can look out
> And see the men at play."

The social message is to the privileged classes. Employers must treat their employees as persons, not as a labor commodity. They must esteem persons more than profit. To do this is to express the divine democracy of the mind of Christ who became the chief servant of the human race.

Jesus emphasized the sacredness of the human personality. He condemns all toil that degrades, that undermines health. The privileged must give to personality preëminence over property and profit.

There are those who would instruct the Christian minister and advise him as to his proper sphere. They would exhort him to leave international affairs with the statesmen, to leave party interests to

the politicians, to leave industrial conditions with the corporations, and to leave civic affairs with the city fathers. But whatever makes for improved human relationships, for cleaner politics, for improved sanitation, or any public welfare is within the sphere of the Christian minister.

The emphasis has been overmuch on the theological and metaphysical aspects of Christianity rather than the practical, ethical, and social attitude.

Social conditions have very much to do with man's spiritual welfare. There are conditions in which purity and temperance are practically impossible.

In a ministry to physical needs, the Christian is preparing the way for a higher spiritual ministry. Millions are doomed by the slums before they have a chance to live.

"Ever in conflict let me be;
Make me both daring and devout,
From sleek contentment keep me free
And fill me with a buoyant doubt.

Open my eyes to visions girt
With beauty and with wonders lit;
But let me always see the dirt
And all that spawn and die in it."

It has been well stated that the Christianity of Christ is an endeavor to establish a world-wide ideal human society, in which justice and good will shall be realized upon a religious basis.

The great prophets of Israel were the worthy forerunners of Jesus.

Amos, Hosea, Micah, Isaiah, and Jeremiah demand not only personal holiness, but social righteousness. They condemned social injustice as strongly as they commended personal holiness.

Rauschenbusch says of the prophets:

> We have seen that these men were almost indifferent, if not contemptuous, about the ceremonial side of customary religion, but turned with passionate enthusiasm to moral righteousness as a fundamental element in religion. Their religious concern was not restricted to private religion and morality, but dealt preëminently with the social and political life of their nation. Their sympathy was wholly and passionately with the poor and oppressed. If we believe in their divine mission, and in the divine mission of the religion of which they were the chief factors, we cannot repudiate what was fundamental in their lives.[2]

When we come to the supremely authentic teacher, we find that the social teachings of Jesus, in the Sermon on the Mount, consisted of the two great ideas of the kingdom of God and righteousness. The fundamental purpose of the coming of Christ on earth was to establish the kingdom of God on earth.

The foes of the social program of Jesus are the foes who desire false profits in business and the foes who are false prophets in theology.

The practical foes for the sake of profits regard any principle in industry as impracticable which may endanger the size of the dividends.

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[2] "Christianity and the Social Christ." By Rauschenbusch. The Macmillan Company.

The theoretical foes who boast of orthodoxy gladly resign themselves to all the social wretchedness and woe in order to uphold their theological notion.

An advocate of this type of theology writes: "The uplift of society as a whole is a perversion of gospel salvation which is purely individualistic."

There is a third foe of the kingdom of God on earth, the atheist who denies all spiritual agency and purpose and leaves the world at the mercy of blind material forces.

Against these varied but agreeing types of mind, let us believe and pray the prayer which Jesus taught us to pray: "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

Dr. Halford E. Luccock, in "The East Window," writes:

> Either the world must be permeated with Christian ideals, or the Church itself will lose its savor, become itself infected with the pagan standards of the world, and be trodden under the feet of men. There is an irrepressible conflict between Christ and the basic ideas of a large part of so-called civilization to-day. To put profits before personality is the simplest and most complete way of denying everything that Jesus ever said. It may be said to the capitalism which would fatten itself even on the bodies and souls of little children: Run your smokestacks up till they touch the skies. Pile your dividends into the banks until they burst the sides. If your system is founded on iniquity, or if its profits come from the exploitation of little children, the pulse of a single wronged or defrauded child will beat it down. For

in this pulse-beat is the mightiest force in the world, the heart-beat of the Son of God.[3]

It is estimated that five per cent of our working people live in slums, thousands of them in crowded tenement rooms into which no ray of sunlight ever enters. It is a dark blot on our civilization that in this great big roomy world, with its boundless expanse of fresh air and light and sunshine, large numbers of families have to live and rear their children in congested and insanitary surroundings. One authority estimates that about one-tenth of the people of the United States are living under conditions which are an acute menace to health, morals, and family life. Christians who have the spirit and compassion of Jesus Christ cannot be content alongside this large number of the unprivileged in our human family.

[3] "The East Window." By Halford E. Luccock. Copyright 1925. Used by permission of the Abingdon Press.

PART EIGHT

THE ULTIMATE VICTORY OF GOD THE FATHER

CHAPTER XXX

THE HOPELESS OUTLOOK

FAITH in the ultimate victory of God in the world is based on two considerations: (1) The mark of improvableness which is stamped on life and the world; (2) The setting forth in distinctness and clearness of the gospel of Christ, and the increasing application of the teachings of Jesus as the only workable principles in human life and society.

As preliminary to the general discussion there may be set forth the hopeless outlook on life.

The golden age of heathenism has always been in the past. To the Greeks and Romans it was an age in which justice lived among men. They enjoyed the greatest abundance of everything. Eternal spring spread the earth with fruit and flowers for them. The silver age was far inferior, and justice retired to the mountains. The brazen age came next, when men first saw war and battles, and justice fled up to heaven. The iron age was last, and as justice was no more on earth, men were under no restraint and committed every species of crime.

The idealization of the past at the expense of the present and future arises from a natural disposition of men to look on the dark side of things. They are ready to exclaim that all greatness and good-

ness have disappeared from the earth. "The world is out of joint—O cursed spite that I was ever born to set it right."

They think the world is out of order because their liver is out of order. They mistake the misplacement of a brain atom for a moral earthquake in which all virtues are swallowed up.

Again, it is a sort of ludicrous characteristic of human nature to unduly glorify the past. We are prone to crown the characters and events of the past with a halo of glory which does not belong to them. There were giants in those days. The heroes of our childhood days are large and grand as we look at them standing in the hazy mist of memory's land. Everything in nature was glorious. The rose had a richer hue and a more fragrant odor. The watermelons were redder-meated and sweeter than we have ever found them since.

The apples and peaches had a better flavor than now. In the days of domestic soap-making, I heard an old lady complain that the soap didn't boil like it used to boil. It is a mere freak of fancy or memory.

> "My granddad notes the world's worn cogs
> And says that things are going to the dogs;
> His granddad in his house of logs,
> He swore that things were going to the dogs;
> His granddad, 'mong the Flemish bogs,
> Declared that things were going to the dogs;
> But I arise just here to state
> That the dogs have had an awful wait."

It has been ever after this manner.

Horace, who died eight years before the birth of Jesus, declared that the age of the fathers was worse than that of their ancestors and prophesied that the times of posterity would be yet more degenerate. In the far older times the patriarch Jacob lamented before Pharaoh: "Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage." The ancient Confucius cried: "The present time is the day of evil and of ruin."

Thus men have ever been inclined to look mournfully on the world of their own day. Jerome wept in his grotto at Bethlehem over the declension of Christendom and was loud in his praises of the former days of the triumphs of Christianity. The presbyter Sylvanus of Marseilles in the fifth century exclaimed: "How unlike itself has Christianity now become as we look upon it! How deeply it has sunken!" Agobard two hundred years later bemoaned: "The Church is growing old, and how decrepit she is becoming!" Boniface delineated his time thus: "Purity and piety have almost vanished; brutal sports and the spirit of war now take the place of quiet work and prayer." Bernard of Clairvaux thought of the time "when the apostles cast their nets to catch men, not as we do to gain gold and silver."

Every period lifts its sad lamentations. The era of the Reformation poured out its mournful

strains. The Lollards upbraided the Church, declaring that faith, hope, love, and the hosts of heavenly graces had fled. A contemporary of John Huss described the century of the Great Council as one in which the few truly pious persons were sent to the stake, while the godless were allowed to live. Wycliffe, the morning star of the Reformation in England, believed that the last age of the Church was at hand and saw in an earthquake of his time a premonition of divine judgment. Luther had the conviction that God was working in him the final manifestation of grace and the last day was at hand.

Denominational publications have in each age bewailed the departure from the faith.

The former times are better than these. The times are not as good as they used to be. They never were.

Difference in outlook on the future constitutes a striking difference between the Christian faith and paganism.

In contrast with Greece and Rome the Golden Age of Christianity is in the future.

Juvenal wrote:

> A ninth age of the world is ours, in wickedness greater than that of iron.

An Assyrian tablet dating from 2800 B.C. preserved in Constantinople says:

> Our earth is degenerate in these latter days; there are signs

that the world is speedily coming to an end; bribery and corruption are common; children no longer obey their parents; every man wants to write a book, and the end of the world is evidently approaching.

A writer in a Church periodical says:

As a matter of fact, we suspect that the real place to study the "good old days" is not in history at all, but in mythology. There is no record of them amid the ruins of antiquity. Even

> "The glory that was Greece
> And the Grandeur that was Rome"

reveal little evidences of their presence. Indeed, the thoughtful student of history, as he delves among the archives of the past, is apt by and by to conclude that distance lends enchantment in time as well as in space. Here and there, it is true, he will come upon expressions that suggest that the mythical period referred to was just a generation or two back; but a diligent search of the records of those generations usually convinces him that one must pursue his quest still farther.

There is a shallow optimism that closes the eyes to all wrong and ignores the evil. It is the optimism of good fortune. The person who is born with a silver spoon in his mouth naturally believes that everything is all right with the world. This is a most insecure foundation, for these people become cynics and pessimists when their little material foundation is destroyed.

Pessimism sees the evil, but thinks it is incurable. In the "Rubaiyat," Omar Khayyam raises the wail:

> "Ah Love! Could you and I with fate conspire
> To grasp this sorry scheme of things entire,
> Would we not shatter it to bits, and then
> Remold it nearer to the heart's desire?"

Pessimism sees only the present woe and misfortune and ignores the fact of divine providence and divine power.

The hopeless view of the world is supported both by a false theological interpretation and by a materialistic philosophy of life. The two extremes of reactionary theology and atheism meet.

A noted premillennial evangelist has said in effect that the darker the world becomes the lighter his own heart becomes, since we are nearer the catastrophic end of the present world order. The atheist logically agrees in the main contention of this type of theologian, that the nature of the world is not adapted to the triumph of spiritual forces. The theory of pessimism, like necessity, makes strange bedfellows.

Against this curious combination of opposition stands the hopefulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ, which fairly faces the evils of the world and human nature, without despairing, in the confident faith that the power of the gospel of God our Father in Jesus Christ is stronger than the powers of evil. Jesus Christ was sure of the future, sure that love is stronger than evil, and that the kingdom of God on earth would ultimately triumph.

The poets of the Christian faith have given the finest expression of Christian optimism. Tennyson writes:

> If there are twenty million summers stored in the sunlight

still, we are far from the noon of man, there is time for the race to grow.

"O yet we trust that somehow good
Will be the final goal of ill,
To pangs of nature, sins of will,
Defects of doubt, and taints of blood;

That nothing walks with aimless feet;
That not one life shall be destroyed,
Or cast as rubbish to the void,
When God hath made the pile complete."

"This fine old world of ours is but a child yet in the gocart. Patience, give it time to learn its limbs: there is a hand that guides."

"Faith reels not in the storm of warring words,
She brightens at the clash of 'Yes' and 'No.'
She sees the Best that glimmers through the Worst,
She feels the sun is hid but for a night;
She spies the Summer thro' the Winter bud,
She tastes the fruit before the blossom falls,
She hears the lark within the songless egg,
She finds the fountain where they wailed, Mirage?"

"Ev'n now we hear with inward strife
A motion toiling in the gloom;
The Spirit of the years to come
Yearning to mix himself with Life."

Browning with the same note of hopefulness writes:

"My own hope is, a sun will pierce
The thickest cloud earth ever stretched;
That after Last returns the First,
Though a wide compass round be fetched;
That what began best can't end worst,
Nor what God blest once prove accurst."

Through all the apparently impersonal processes of nature there runs the personal purpose of God and he is forever on the side of the good. He is the omnipotent reënforcement of the good which means its ultimate victory.

"Careless seems the great avenger; history's pages but record
One death grapple in the darkness 'twixt old systems and the Word;
Truth forever on the scaffold, wrong forever on the throne—
Yet that scaffold sways the future, and behind the dim unknown,
Standeth God within the shadow, keeping watch above his own."

CHAPTER XXXI

THE MARK OF IMPROVABLENESS

THERE is the mark of improvableness, the inherent capacity for progress, which is stamped on life and the world. It may be replied of course that improvement in the material realm may be accompanied by decline in character attainment. The argument, however, is that the inherent quality of improvableness stamped on life and nature is indicative of the progressive purpose of God in all realms of life, and that as we take a long view we see the onward sweep of human progress.

1. *There is the fact of physical or material progress.* The age of man on earth according to the scientific estimate is more than 100,000 years. There were 75,000 years spent in savagery, 20,000 in barbarism, and 7,000 in civilization.

Savagery is divided into three periods. First, our early human ancestors were without language and without clothes. They lived on raw fruits and nuts. Second, there was the discovery of the use of fire. This enabled man to move out of the tropical and subtropical zones, and to cook his food. Third, there was the invention of the bow and arrow, and the conflict with ferocious beasts with a better advantage. The skins of animals were used for clothes and tents.

Barbarism is divided into three periods.

First, there was the invention of pottery, which enabled men to improve on the method of cooking. Hot water was used for cleanliness.

Second, there was the domestication of plants, and the domestication of animals—the dog, sheep, ox, horse, and camel. Individual ownership began and a crude commerce.

Then, there was the discovery of the process of smelting iron. Iron took the place of flint and stone instruments. This resulted in better cultivation of soil, better houses, and more extensive wars.

Civilization is divided into three periods.

First, there was the invention of hieroglyphics and written language. This gave the power of transmitting to future generations experiences, triumphs, and failures. Oral traditions are unreliable. There was the prevalence of war in hand-to-hand encounter among Egyptians, Babylonians, Hittites, Phœnicians, Carthaginians, Greeks, and Romans.

Second, there was the invention of gunpowder, the mariner's compass, paper-making, the printing press, and the astronomical works of Copernicus. Gunpowder revolutionized warfare.

The mariner's compass made possible explorations and the printing press and paper made possible the diffusion of knowledge. Up to this time the universe was regarded as a small affair with the earth a flat disc at the center. It was the age of Shakespeare, Bacon, Columbus, and Galileo.

Third, the beginning of the nineteenth century was the most wonderful period in the history of the race. There was the discovery of the steam engine and the invention of the loom. There followed in rapid succession the theory of evolution, the germ theory of disease, aseptics, and anæsthetics. There were greater changes than in the preceding one hundred centuries. There was the marvelous progress of all the sciences, more wonderful than fairy tales.

Some of the wonders are the phonograph, spectrum analysis, radium, wireless telegraphy, and radio.

The following summary has been made:

The nineteenth century received from its predecessor the horse; it gives the automobile and locomotive.

It received the goose quill; it gives the typewriter. It received the scythe; it gives the mowing machine. It received the sickle; it gives the harvester. It received the hand printing press; it gives the Hoe cylinder press. It received Johnson's Dictionary; it gives the Century Dictionary. It received gunpowder; it gives nitroglycerin.

It received the tallow dip; it gives the arc light. It received the galvanic battery; it gives the dynamo. It received the flintlock; it gives the automatic-firing Maxim gun.

It received the sailing ship; it gives the steam-

ship. It received the beacon signal fire; it gives wireless telegraphy.

It received wood and stone for structure; it gives twenty-storied skyscrapers of steel. It received the spinning wheel; it gives cotton and wool factories. It received the needle; it gives the sewing machine. It received flint, steel, and punk; it gives the friction match. It received winter ice; it gives artificial refrigeration. It received sundials; it gives chronometers, set by electricity. It received drawings and paintings; it gives photography and moving pictures. It received balloons; it gives aëroplanes. What the twentieth century shall give to its successors will doubtless be a still more wonderful bequest.

Inventions have resulted in a vast increase of wealth. So long as man is entirely occupied with his own wants, progress is impossible. But when the labor of one man is sufficient for the support of many, the labor of some is set free for other occupations. The division of labor is begun. Man has been equipped with more tools within the last fifty years than for thousands of years before.

This progress may be noted in other respects. Man has taken the crude wild dog and by selective process he has developed the St. Bernard, the Newfoundland, the greyhound, the setter, the pointer, and the poodle—if the poodle means progress. He has taken the wild horse and has produced the Arabian, the Belgian, and the Shetland.

Man has taken the wild crab apple and developed the Ben Davis, the Golden Pippin, and the Winesap.

He has developed the wild poisonous Almonds into the Chinese Cling and Elberta peaches. He has developed the wild gourd into the Rocky Ford cantaloupe, the New England pumpkin, and the Georgia watermelon. He has developed the roots of the deadly nightshade into the Irish potato. He has developed the little red berry called the love apple into the tomato. He has developed the wild grasses into wheat, oats, rye, and barley. He has developed the wild rose into the American Beauty rose. He has developed the wild Aster into the Chrysanthemum. He has developed the plain field daisy into the beautiful Shasta daisy.

He has combined the plum and apricot into the plumcot. He has produced the white blackberry. He has transformed the prickly cactus into the bread of the desert.

Of course the question is raised as to how much man has developed himself in spirit and character. A recent writer says: "The modern harvester is beyond the sickle of Ruth. But how does the modern woman compare with Ruth?"

The modern sewing machine is far beyond the needle with which Dorcas made garments for the poor. But is the modern woman far beyond Dorcas? The modern Pullman car is a great improvement in locomotion over the camel which Abraham rode

across the deserts, but a lot of trifling idlers in the Pullman car are not even an improvement over Abraham's camel. St. Paul trudged in the dust along the Appian Way, but a lot of people who make much better time as they raise dust with automobiles are exceedingly scrawny when compared with the great apostle. After all, the main matter is not how rapidly we can travel, but what sort of person the traveler is; not how far can I talk, but have I anything worth saying. G. K. Chesterton jestingly remarks: "It is remarkable that the most perfect means of communication should appear at the precise moment in human history when nobody has anything to say." The progress which we may have made in other respects is another story.

I am at present concerned only with this quality of improvableness which is inwrought into the world structure.

2. *There follows in order the second fact of scientific progress.* We are convinced that this form of progress is in harmony with the purpose of God.

The modern man has attained mastery over the forces of nature. He has yoked the strong physical forces of the world to his chariot. Man speaks to the remote parts of the earth as to a next-door neighbor.

Attention has been given already to some of the achievements of science.

Dr. G. P. Mains writes: "Science has already

beyond measure enriched human thought, banished from whole realms the errors of ignorance, exorcised hoary superstitions, and has literally annihilated the specters, ghosts, and hobgoblins of the former traditional mind." The advance of medical science may be specially noted. Again Dr. Mains says: "Medical science has conquered dread diseases, mitigated the horrors of physical suffering, made surgery a skilled and beneficent art, given to medicine an ever-enlarging knowledge of diseases and their remedies, and transformed the very pestholes of nature into regions of healthy and happy habitations."[1]

No one before the year 1899 A.D. knew that the parasites of malaria were carried by a certain kind of mosquito. No one thought of oil as a means of prevention. Malaria has been a great scourge of humanity. It assisted in the decadence of the Grecian people and destroyed the health of the Roman people so that they were easy victims of barbarian hordes.

In the seventeenth century A.D. a standard medical work gives the following prescription: "For whooping cough pass a child nine times over and under a donkey from left to right." Snails, gathered before breakfast, and pounded shell and all were to be swallowed for consumption. It must have been rather a slow treatment. Blistering was

[1] "Life's Westward Windows." By George P. Mains. Copyright 1925. Used by permission of the Abingdon Press.

a favorite method of treatment. It took the patient's mind off his other troubles. Even now, with homeopaths, allopaths, and osteopaths, all paths lead to the grave, but not quite so rapidly. Scrofula was called the king's evil, and was supposed to be cured by the touch of the king. For hundreds of years people clung to this belief, which was encouraged by monarchs to strengthen their claim to divine rights. Inside of twenty years Charles II touched 92,171 persons. Another favorite treatment was bleeding. This was the first, the second, and the last resort. If the doctor did not know what ailed the patient, and for the most part he did not, he bled him. If he did know, he bled him anyhow.

A consultation resulted in more bleeding. If the patient grew worse, he was to be bled again. If the patient died, it was because there was not enough blood left to bleed him again. If a man received a wound which bled profusely, the doctor did not dress the lacerated wound, but continued to bleed him, though nature was doing the same thing. It was an effort to assist nature.

Inoculation for smallpox and the use of ether and chloroform in surgical operations were undreamed of. The doctor was expected to do something and he usually did it.

The oil of a kitten boiled alive was supposed for some occult reason to be an excellent application for a wound; while ointment, to be effective, must

be applied not only to the injury, but to the weapon that inflicted it. The hair of mad dogs was supposed to be a cure for hydrophobia, and the powdered thigh bone of an executed felon to contain miraculous curative properties.

3. *There is the fact of progress in education.* Since the Renaissance in the fifteenth century A.D. the powers of the mind have been unfettered, and every kind of knowledge—scientific, philosophical, and religious—has been immeasurably increased. The prophetic words have been fulfilled, "Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased."

An authority on the subject has written:

> One hundred years ago there were schools for the common people in only one-half of the country. They are now provided in every State of the union and in every district of every State. One hundred years ago there was little or no provision for the education of girls outside the home. Now the schools and colleges for girls equal in standard and equipment those for boys. One hundred years ago in the common schools there were only the three R's—or, with the rod, four R's. One hundred years ago higher education was confined to Greek, Latin, and mathematics; now there is elaborate equipment for teaching science. One hundred years ago the student bodies in our biggest colleges were not so large as the faculties in the same colleges now. One hundred years ago there were three learned professions: law, medicine, and the ministry; now every vocation is a learned vocation. One hundred years ago much agricultural and mechanical industry was drudgery; now all industries are becoming arts. One hundred years ago the teachers in our common schools were untrained, pedagogy was unknown; now every State has its normal school. One hundred years ago education was purely academic; now industrial education receives equal honor with academic education, and is rapidly receiving equal endowment.

4. *There is the fact of political progress.* Every generation bewails the political corruption. But when was the political situation ever ideal? George Washington said in his day, "Party disputes and personal quarrels are the great businesses of the day. It is a fact too notorious to be concealed that Congress is rent by party strife, and that the attention of Congress is withdrawn from matters of great national concern."

The day after George Washington retired from public life, a leading newspaper in an editorial thanked God that the country was rid of the man who had caused the country all of its troubles. A few years before the Civil War, in a heated political campaign, the pious advocates of one party claimed that it was an outrage to buy a poor man's vote, and that they only gave him money to keep him from selling out to the other fellows, who were rascally enough to bribe him. I would not be understood to imply that we are on the verge of a political Utopia, but there is a closer scrutiny brought to bear upon the moral life of public officials than ever before, and a severer condemnation upon outbroken immorality. For a public man to-day to become immoral is to sound his own death knell. The reign of the corrupt red-nosed demagogue is over. The political motto, "To the victors belong the spoils," has no such sway as in the days of President Jackson.

Civil Service rules now govern the tenure of a mul-

titude of governmental positions. Our candidates for office are required to return sworn statements as to the expense of their campaigns.

A man guilty of bribery is publicly disgraced.

The law ordains severe penalties for employers who seek to control the votes of their employees.

There is an increasing public sentiment against political grafters. In the accounting of public funds the average loss to the public treasury during the administration of Van Buren was $11.75 on each $1,000 received or disbursed. This amount was continually decreased until the administration of McKinley, when no loss was reported. It is a long step from the "divine right of kings" to the watchword of modern democracy that "All just governments derive their power from the consent of the governed." Elihu Root said: "There is not one element of character, of capacity, or of practice going to make up what government ought to be in which there has not been steady and great advance in the progressive development of government by the people."

The set of the ages is toward democracy among all the peoples of the world. There is the indisputable mark of progress. Only the chronic pessimist can hold that former days were better than these.

CHAPTER XXXII

THE MARK OF IMPROVABLENESS (CONCLUDED)

5. *There is the fact of social and ethical progress.* The sentiment of human brotherhood pervades society as never before. In the day of Jesus the Jews called the Gentiles dogs and the Greeks called all others barbarians.

In Rome and Athens the sick and poor and homeless and slaves were neglected. To-day men have begun to realize that Christianity rightly understood is a fellowship of love.

Men begin at last to comprehend that humanity is a whole, a corporate unity, a body, and that all are members of that body.

One hundred years ago the home of a workingman was a hovel, built on an unlighted, sewerless street. Children eight years of age worked sixteen hours a day.

A century ago sports were vicious. Bullfights, prize fights, and bear-baiting were the chief amusements. We must all admit that our football sports are at least a slight advance over this. Great moral ideas are dominating our civilization which were totally absent from the ancient world.

The increasing conception of the worth of men has made human slavery forever impossible. The

human estimate is taking precedence over the property estimate.

The unity of the race and human brotherhood are being woven into the structure of our modern civilization.

A vast amount of present-day legislation is in behalf of the weak and unprivileged. The process of moralization and of socialization is international.

A league of nations in some effective form is inevitable despite the blind reactionism of partisan politics and the jingoism of a narrow nationalism.

The original documents are in the Department of History and Archives of the State of Georgia which give an appraisal of the estate of George Whitefield near Savannah. There were forty-nine slaves with the Biblical names of Adam, Luke, Peter, Job, Matthew, Paul, Isaac, Daniel, Abraham, Samson, Ruth, and Esther. There were many books on theology, and also a copper still.

Slavery and the whisky traffic have been outlawed by the growing conscience of mankind. That class of writers who are muck-raking among the records of the great and good men of the past are engaged in very poor business and would be of more service to humanity if they lived up to the higher standard of our day. New light is constantly breaking forth from the Word of God.

In the good old days preachers could drink intoxicants, but it was thought that they should not drink over three times a day. In the good old days

the saloons advertised a drink for a penny and dead drunk for twopence.

In the good old days of open saloons at Five Points, New York, there was the advertisement, "Drunk for five cents, dead drunk for ten cents, and dead drunk with hay to sleep on fifteen cents."

Only a gloomy fanatic can view the old days, with the slavery and polygamy and dueling and terrible cruelties and wretched prison conditions and oppression of labor with long hours of work, and the open saloon and other flagrant evils which are now outlawed, and claim that the world is growing worse.

Our divorce evil is alarming, and there should be no disposition to ignore it. But the Christian faith possesses the power which shall at last curb this menace to our homes and civilization. We do not find it any better as we look back.

"They marry only to be divorced," writes Tertullian of the men and women of his day. Friends exchanged wives and it was not considered in the least dishonorable to employ the name of friendship for the purpose of seducing a friend's wife. "It came to pass," writes the historian Uhlhorn, referring to the depravity of the Romans in the days of Christ, "that women of high birth enrolled their names in the police register of common prostitutes in order that they might abandon themselves entirely to the most wanton excesses!"

We should strongly resist the evils which threaten

present-day society, and at the same time be strengthened for the conflict as we observe that in the main there has been progress.

6. *There is the final fact of the progress of Christianity.* Only a few decades ago the burning of heretics was a favorite pastime. Religious persecution has ceased except in a much milder form. There is a better understanding to-day of the Bible and the meaning of religion than at any other time in the history of the world.

We can no longer agree with eminent theologians of a generation ago that man was created by the Trinity in 4004 B.C. at nine o'clock in the morning. And much else which was formerly held we no longer accept.

A recent writer says: "Although dogmas die, religion is continually reborn. Historic formulations of spiritual experience have their day and become obsolete, but the experience itself abides. If ever a time shall come when every aspect of truth shall stand forth clear and compelling, religion in that day will be more than ever alive."

There has been a constant increase of the Christian population from century to century, contradicting the prophecy of Voltaire that "Ere the beginning of the nineteenth century, Christianity will have disappeared from the earth."

The Church is not an obsolescent institution, but in a spirit of Christian self-sacrifice is helping

more different people in more different ways than ever before.

Jesus Christ is the Leader of our race. Emerson says: "Jesus has not so much written as plowed his name in human history."

The religion of Jesus Christ in its deepest vision of truth and its most spiritual methods is our goal. The upward calling of God is in Christ Jesus. Even Renan said: "Whatever may be the surprises of the future, Jesus will never be surpassed." Humanity slowly advances toward him in religious living, for he ever is and must be our Saviour and Lord.

There are some very good people among us who confidently believe that we are living in the worst days, and who rather hope that we are living in the last days. They bewail a situation in which they claim our colleges and universities are given over to atheism. No one claims that the conditions are ideal, but the fact is that there is a larger per cent of Christians and Church members among College students than ever before. Encouraging progress has been made over former days.

President Burton, of Chicago University, makes a statement of conditions over a century ago:

> At Bowdoin College in 1807 there was only one Christian. At Yale there was for four years but one, and but four or five in other years about the beginning of the century. Often every student was a professed infidel, or at least outside the Church. Bishop Meade of Virginia said in 1811 that William and Mary College was a hotbed of French infidelity and that for many years in every educated man he expected to find an infidel.

We do not find the ideal days back of us. But there are many people who insist that the Church is far below what it used to be and that the preachers to-day do not begin to compare with the preachers in the good old days. Over half a century ago Dr. Young J. Allen attended two camp meetings in Georgia, where they made a lot of fuss; and at one of them, out of an immense crowd, he secured fifty cents for the conversion of the heathen world, and at the other only managed to get his hat back.

When were the good old times anyhow?

In 1826 a Georgia presiding elder bewails the lack of spirituality among the people, and intimates that they come to church only to make a display of themselves.

A hundred years ago a writer said that there were three kinds of preachers: the dull, the duller, and the dullest.

In 1823 Nathaniel Emmons preached a sermon on "The Departure of the People from God" in which he bewailed the lack of family discipline, the desecration of the Sabbath, and disbelief of the word of God. A few years before Emmons, Jonathan Edwards lamented the religious dullness and the almost universal prevalence of immorality. So runs the story of the good old times.

From St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians we learn that they were divided into four factions, some had fallen into gross immorality, and the holy communion was degraded into a festive

banquet. St. John writes to seven Churches in Asia Minor, and only two escape severe rebuke.

When were the good old days?

Was it when the early Christians were burned to light up the garden of a Roman emperor?

Was it when the Roman Catholic Church burned heretics? Was it when the Protestant Church persecuted Unitarians? Was it when the Church of England persecuted the Puritans? Was it when the Puritans persecuted Quakers and Baptists? Was it when the Episcopal Church persecuted Methodists?

Was it when the Methodists virtually drove from the ranks William Booth of the Salvation Army? Despite our sins and follies for which we should repent, we are living in the best days the world has ever seen. Christ has not died in vain and humanity sweeps onward and upward.

In pioneer days an old man and his wife were moving from Ohio to Nebraska. They reached the Mississippi River and had to camp for several days. The old man went down to the river's bank to get a bucket of water and was astonished to see the water going in the wrong direction. He said to his wife: "Why, I thought this river ran from north to south." She replied: "That is what the geography said." He said: "Well, the book is wrong or we are turned around, for this river is running to the north." They were greatly troubled and actually thought of returning to Ohio. While in

this despondent mood, a horseman rode up and they asked him about it. He told them that what they thought was the current was only an eddy in the stream. "Look away out yonder in the middle of the river. There goes a big log. It is floating in the right direction."

As we take the long view of our world, we see the great current of God's providence and power sweeping on majestically in the right direction. Jesus Christ is still the head of humanity.

"We are the ancients of the earth and in the morning of the times." We must dare to hold to Christian optimism in the face of the most destructive war of history, for the world has been convinced as never before of the folly, stupidity, and crime of war. The nations after testing every false ideal of national life and international relationship will at last try Christianity, and bring in the new era of permanent peace.

"I feel the earth move sunward,
I join the great march onward,
And take by faith, while living,
My freehold of thanksgiving."

CHAPTER XXXIII

THE WORKABILITY OF THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST

I

THE second basis of hopefulness for the world is in the setting forth of the vital teachings of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and the workability of these teachings.

The face and figure of Christ have been dimmed and the vital simplicity of his gospel has been complicated by false traditional accretions.

The same peril besets us against which Jesus warned the theological teachers of his day, in "making void the word of God through traditions."

Dr. L. P. Jacks, in his book on "Religious Perplexities," has described the injury to vital Christianity:

> Christianity in the official or authorized presentation of it is a smothered religion, smothered almost to the point of total asphyxiation and collapse, but not quite; smothered by the vested interests of great institutions, and by the ambitious fears and self-seekings that such interests breed; smothered by the elaborate theological defenses that the Christians have built, not against Antichrist, but against each other; smothered by anxieties, not unnatural in their embroilments, for its own future. If you take Christianity along with its entanglements, encumbrances, and unnatural alliances, if you present it with all the secular baggage which the ages have fastened upon it, you will then find it a hopelessly perplexing thing.[1]

[1] "Religious Perplexities." By L. P. Jacks. Doubleday, Doran & Company, Inc.

The Nicene Creed has bulked larger in the thought of the churchmen of the past than the Sermon on the Mount, but this misplaced emphasis of a rigid orthodoxy did not lead to industrial justice nor to arbitration for international disputes.

There has been a confusion of the central realities of the Christian doctrine with the interpretation and explanations of this doctrine in the history of the Church.

Jesus affirmed the abiding certainties of the Christian doctrine with absolute positiveness and finality, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."

Contrary to popular notions, Jesus confessed his absence of knowledge of some things; but when he came to moral issues, to righteousness, to right relationships between man and man, and God and man, he always spoke with the note of authority and certainty.

The truths of the gospel of Christ that are basic and fundamental are:

(1) God is our Father; with the necessary postulate of human brotherhood.

(2) There is the fact of Jesus Christ: his incarnation, atonement, resurrection, and ascension.

(3) There is the presence and power of the Holy Spirit.

(4) Man is the child of God and immortal.

(5) There is the fact of the kingdom of God, spiritual and universal in its nature.

All of these mean a right relationship between man and God, and between man and man. We are to keep the central message distinct and emphatic. This is our safety and strength.

The one truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ which is the basis of these five realities, and which belongs to each of them, is the supremacy of love, a love which gives Christ's valuation of the human personality, which accentuates human brotherhood, which makes application of the teachings of Jesus to society, which holds with a vital working faith to the universal application of the gospel, and which carries the assurance of the victory of the gospel in this present world.

II

These vital realities of the gospel of Jesus Christ are the only practicable and workable ideas in human life and society. As the revelation of Jesus Christ is freed from the false elements of traditionalism, it makes a universal appeal, which will result at last in the application of the essential verities of the Christian revelation to all the relationships of life.

The false notion still lingers in some belated minds that Christianity contains principles that will find a perfect application in heaven, but which are impractical in our workaday world; whereas the

Christian religion offers the only mode of life and conduct that is practical. The supreme and urgent need of society to-day is a vital, evangelical Christianity. The so-called hard-headed business man who thinks the Sermon on the Mount visionary and unworkable is in reality soft-headed. Every way except the Christian way leads to a blind alley. Our material security and temporal well-being can only be worked out under the leadership of Jesus Christ.

The teachings of Jesus have been declared impracticable by men, even intelligent men who have missed the truth of Christ because of its setting in Oriental imagery.

There are those who claim that if Christ's moral teachings were to be carried out, civilization would come to an end.

The very reverse is true: If Christ's principles are not carried out, civilization will come to an end. Jesus never expected to be taken literally, but he did expect to be taken sensibly and seriously. For example: "If any one strike you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also." Jesus did not obey his own words literally. When our Lord was struck in the face at his trial, he did not turn the other cheek literally. He rebuked the man who struck him.

Dr. James Moffatt interprets the passage:

> This did not refer to fighting. To slap a person on the right cheek would have to be done with the back of the right hand

unless the person happened to be left-handed. Fighting is not done in that way. This is a figurative expression of an Oriental custom of insulting a person. It is the quick movement of the right hand toward the person insulted, like brushing a fly off a person's head or face, moving along to the left with the head turned at about forty-five-degree angle, and the nose and upper lip turned up in proportion as if to say, "Get out of my way; you are beneath my notice." All this constituted an open insult and not striking a person. What the master meant was when a person insults you, do not retaliate, but pray for him, be good to him, and he will soon repent.

Whatever may be our interpretation of this particular passage, the working principle which runs through the teachings of Jesus is that we are to overcome evil with good. It is the reverse of this method that is impracticable. It is hate and impurity and greed and selfishness and all that Jesus condemned that will not work in our world, because the world was constructed to harmonize with the good.

There are two world views: According to one, the universe is on the side of the angels. The stars in their courses are fighting against everything that is false and ugly and bad. There is a power not ourselves, beyond ourselves, that is making for righteousness, so that every valiant crusader for a fairer future may carry on in the assurance that the forces of the universe are at his back. According to the other, man has emerged from a universe that knows him not, nor cares for that for which he, at his best, supremely cares.

Would it make no difference which of these

world views a man accepted? The one has provided a foundation for mighty faiths and hopes and loves. It has stirred the imagination of the race, given birth to poetry and music and art. It has profoundly influenced the moral life of mankind. But the other—man a local, transient incident in a universe that is dumb to his prayer—who can fail to see that a universal acceptance of that view would cause a depressing shadow to fall upon the human spirit, and a paralyzing sense of futility to creep over the wills of men?

The atheistic philosophy is one of pessimism and despair as touching the triumph of righteousness. In a materialistic world, we cannot expect spiritual principles to prevail, since they do not fit into the scheme and nature of things. In a world made by God, who is our Father, the spiritual principles are normal and fit into the world order. The God who made the world is also the author of the spiritual laws of life.

False principles and ideals will be constantly thrown to the scrap heap as nonworkable. The workability of the will of God the Father as revealed in Jesus Christ will at last insure the triumph of that will in the world.

"Keep heart, O Comrade! God may be delayed
By evil, but he suffers no defeat;
Even as a chance rock in an upland brook
May change a river's course; and yet no rock,
No, nor the baffling mountains of the world,

Can hold it from its destiny, the sea.
God is not foiled; the drift of the world-will
Is stronger than all wrong. Earth and her years,
Down joy's bright way, or sorrow's longer road,
Are moving toward the purpose of the skies."

Gladstone said after the defeat of the Reform bill for which he had labored, "Time is on our side."

Sublime was the declaration of Woodrow Wilson, "I had rather fail in a cause that will ultimately triumph than to win in a cause that will finally fail. We may not win as early as we might wish, but we know that in the long run the opposition cannot win at all."

"On the far reef the breakers
Recoil in scattered foam,
Yet still the sea behind them
Urges its forces home;
Its chant of triumph surges
Through all the thunderous din;
The wave may break in failure,
But the tide is sure to win.

The reef is strong and cruel;
Upon its jagged wall
One wave, a score, a hundred,
Broken and beaten fall;
Yet in defeat they conquer,
The sea comes flooding in;
Wave upon wave is routed,
But the tide is sure to win.

O mighty sea! thy message
In clanging spray is cast;
Within God's plan of progress
It matters not at last

How wide the shores of evil,
  How strong the reefs of sin;
The wave may be defeated,
  But the tide is sure to win."

CHAPTER XXXIV

THE WORKABILITY OF THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST (CONCLUDED)

I

THERE is the abiding faith which worketh by love, and whatever disproved traditional elements hinder the free and full energy of this faith must be courageously discarded. We are to hold with the author of the forty-sixth Psalm:

> "God is our refuge and strength,
> A very present help in trouble."

But we do not believe the science of this author, that the earth is flat, and that it is the central world around which the stars and planets revolve, and that it was made in six days.

The world of to-day cannot be won to Jesus Christ by stressing a theology that will not work with posterity.

Vital Christianity has had to overcome the wrong interpretation of its friends and the bitter opposition of its enemies, but it reasserts itself with the vigor of eternal youth and freshness. Just after the adoption of the Constitution of the United States anarchic clubs were formed in every city. Religion was neglected where it was not denied.

Even in England Christianity was generally regarded as fictitious. Religion failed to supply

any motive power for morality. Public ruin seemed imminent.

Yet better days came.

Sentiment for law and order was restored. Christianity came through the crisis and won again the affections and loyalty of men. The world will not dispense with Christianity, for nothing else will work.

There appeared sometime ago a significant editorial in the *Wall Street Journal* from which a partial quotation is made:

> The *Wall Street Journal* has no concern with theological discussions. It takes no part for or against any creed, but it is intensely interested in the economic and political effects of any change in the thought, the habits, and the lives of men. If there has been a marked decline in religious faith, that fact must be of profound and far-reaching significance. It alters the basic conditions of civilization. It becomes a factor in the markets. It changes the standards and affects the values of things which are bought and sold. It concerns the immediate interests of those who never had such a faith almost as much as it does the lives of those who have had the faith and lost it. . . . Whatever may be a man's own personal beliefs, there is no one who would not prefer to do business with a person who really believes in a future life.

This vital religious faith is the only satisfactory working principle in this individual life and the only power that can produce individual happiness. All who have been dominated in life by purposes contrary to the life of faith have failed to enter into any genuine contentment of spirit.

False materialistic conceptions of life do not fit

in even with the activities and pursuits of our material world: they will not work.

II

A large measure of disregard for law is traceable to a naturalistic philosophy of life.

The theory is: "Morality is a matter of social discipline; it is not an inherent principle in nature like the law of gravitation, but is a sort of understanding arrived at by nations and communities for the better regulation of affairs." This sort of mundane morality proves insufficient as a moral motive power. The theory of the gradual growth of man's conception of morality does not place morality on a naturalistic basis. The fact that all history and experience testify that nothing else will work in our world except the fundamental moralities is evidence that only God's laws will work in God's world. A convincing evidence of their divine nature is in their workability. Morality is as inherent in the world as the law of gravitation, and the Ten Commandments can no more be violated without the inevitable penalty than the law of gravitation.

The fact that the child learns by experiment the law of gravitation does not disprove the inherent principle of the law.

I am not contending for a theory; but if through the method of divine tutelage the Ten Commandments were gradually evolved by experiment, then

it was God's method of stamping the divine law ineffaceably on the human spirit.

The world is so constructed that nothing will really work but moral conduct. The ground of hope for our world is that at last every false experiment will be thrown to the scrap heap as not adaptable to the world in which we live.

> "Fierce though the fiends may fight,
> Long though the angels hide,
> We know that truth and right
> Have the universe on their side."

In a world which the devil made, vice and crime would fit in and would be natural for that kind of world. Purity, truthfulness, faith, and love in the devil's world would be against nature.

If this were a devil's world, the philosophy of that whole class of muck writers who pour out their mental sewage on the public would be true. If this were a devil's world, the philosophy of H. L. Mencken would be true, whose conceit is said to be so large that it leaves no room for a conscience. He gives as the condition of happiness: to be well fed, to have a sense of superiority, and to be constantly amused according to one's taste. This is the ethics of the jungle, and might be called hog-philosophy.

Bernard Shaw was honest enough to say: "I am no more a Christian than you are, gentle reader, but I am ready to admit that after contemplating

the world for more than sixty years, I see no way out of the world's misery but the way of Christ."

A materialistic philosophy which finds expression in magazines and modern fiction is to the effect that all natural desires are self-justifying. To say that one has a right to yield to natural impulses without restraint reduces man to the level of a beast. The unbridled indulgence of desire soon ends in physical exhaustion and moral degeneracy. The cry is, follow nature, glorious nature, and then when there results the inevitable penalty of suffering, these same people are loud in their complaints against the world order.

Much is said about the revolt of youth. There should be a revolt against certain traditional notions, and hoary customs, and entrenched wrongs. The revolt of youth against fundamental moralities means collision with a divinely established order and the wreck of life. The youth are urged to run the entire gamut of human experience. But some experiments only a fool will make. I have never taken a killing dose of poison. It is an experiment I do not propose to make.

I have never tested by experience the result of jumping from a ten-story building. I am more than willing to profit by somebody else's experience. There might be some thrill in falling through the air, but I do not want the experience of striking the bottom,

The safety of the individual and of society is in the supremacy and authority of the spiritual.

Spencer, Huxley, and a long line of illustrious thinkers who are not numbered among the orthodox, testify to the indispensableness of the Christian religion in the preservation of law and social order.

III

In Jesus Christ there is the perfect expression and the perfect unity of religion and ethics. Conscience is quickened and guided by looking upon the character of the stalwart saints of God, both in the record of Scripture and in the history of the Church. But there is no method that can take the place of looking into the face of Jesus Christ, that face which is an "illuminated conscience."

Respect for an obedience to law cannot be increased nor maintained apart from the religious appeal and motive.

Canon Gore did not state the case too strongly when he said: "No Sabbath means no Church; no Church means no worship; no worship means no religion; no religion means no morality; no morality means no society; no society means no government; no government means anarchy."

Radical theorizers may tear down and destroy, but they are without any constructive program for building up reverence for law and for the moralizing of social relationships.

Dr. Charles A. Ellwood writes:

Self-interest as a dominant motive is bound to result in social failure; even in the economic sphere it is bound ultimately to fail. When it dominates, the worker will cease to work, will curtail production as soon as his selfish interest is satisfied; the employer will retire when his pile is made, unless he has in the meantime acquired an overmastering greed. Our world cannot hope to go forward to a social life that is harmonious and worth while on such a basis.[1]

The gospel of Jesus Christ affords the only working basis for the international relationships of the world. The most impracticable men among us are the hard-headed militarists, only they have nightmares instead of visions.

Our confidence in the ultimate victory of God is based on the twofold foundation: First, the inherent improvableness of the world and man; and, second, the vital simplicities of the Christian faith, with the workability of the facts of the revelation of Jesus Christ.

"So through the clouds of Calvary there shines
His face, and I believe that evil dies
And good lives on, loves on, and conquers all.
All war must end in peace. These clouds are lies;
They cannot last. The blue sky is the truth.
For God is love. Such is my faith. I have
My reasons for it, and I find them strong
Enough. And you? You want to argue? Well,
I can't. It is a choice. I choose the Christ."

[1] "The Reconstruction of Religion." By C. A. Ellwood. The Macmillan Company.

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